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# Chronicle of Events

July 1927.

- 1 July '27 Nagpur Congress Committee suspended Arms Act Satyagraha in view of Mahatma Gandhi's opinion that an armed Satyagraha cannot break the Arms Act.  
Continuation of the debate on the India Office Estimates in the Commons—Earl Winterton on Reforms.  
Blow to textile industry in view of India Government's decision against protection—Mills closed in Bombay.
- 2 July do. The Non Brahmin Confederation at Coimbatore commenced its Session under the presidency of Dewan Bahadur Kuma swami Reddiar—Passed resolution on the second day allowing such non-Brahmins to join the Congress as desired to do so.
- 3 July do. All-India Khadi Exhibition opened by Mahatma Gandhi at Bangalore—The Mahatma's effort to create khadi atmosphere in Mysore State.  
Serious communal riots in villages in Nadia District, Bengal arising out of cow-killing as a sequel to preaching by a moulavi.
- 5 July do. Punjab Moslem League passed resolution condemning the Judgment of Mr Justice Dalip Singh in the 'Rangila Rasul' Case which provided complete immunity to scurrilous writers attacking revered founders of religion—Promulgation of new law urged.
- 6 July do. Fense situation in Lahore following "Rangila Rasul" and "Risala Vartman" Cases—prominent Khilafatists arrested for disobeying magisterial order prohibiting meetings.  
Gambling under official auspices to raise funds for the Burma University severely condemned and criticised in the Burma Council.
- 7 July do. Burma Council—Motion for abolition of the Capitation and Thathameda taxes lost.
- 8 July do. Punjab Governor refused to receive a Muslim deputation whose representation had a close reference to the attacks made on the High Court Judges.  
Burma Council—Non-Official resolution for combating corruption in Judiciary carried.
- 9 July do. Revd. Ottama's manifesto condemning the British policy of the separation of Burma from India and appealing to the people of India not to give countenance to such movement.  
Labour unrest and strike in Southern India—prompt intervention and settlement urged in a Madras Labour meeting.
- 10 July do. Death in London of Sir Laia Gangaram, a member of the Agricultural Commission and a great philanthropist of the Punjab.
- 11 July do. Maulana Mahomed Ali in a series of articles deprecated the muslim agitation demanding Mr. Justice Dalip Singh's resignation.  
Rescue of Minor Girls—Non-party meeting in Calcutta presided over by Governor—Mayor's appeal for funds for the provision and endowment of home for the rescued minor girls—Mayor advocates public whipping for miscreants.  
Serious communal riot in Multan originating in the murder of 2 Moslems while a Mohurrum procession was proceeding—Curfew order issued and military picket posted—Casualties were muslims 5 killed, 6 injured; Hindus 6 killed and 11 injured and 1 sikh killed—Elsewhere Mohurrum passed off peacefully.
- 12 July do. Mill-Owners' deputation to the Viceroy in connection with the rejection of the Tariff Board's recommendations by the Government of India.

- 14 July '27 Official communique from Simla announced the appointment of a special commission of enquiry by His Majesty's Government to enquire into the position of Indians in Kenya and East Africa.  
Big public meeting in Madras on the Combatores resolution of the Non-Brahmin confederation and the attitude of the justices in entering the Congress and passing resolution of non-acceptance of office.
- 15 July do. Punjab Khilafat Committee in a meeting passed indignant resolution against the Rangila Rasul Judgment and demanded removal of Justice Dalip Singh—Resolutions were also passed in moslem meetings at Delhi, Bombay and Rangoon to the same effect.
- 16 July do. The Y. M. C. A. and Politics—The enquiry into the allegations of the European Association began in Calcutta before Mr. Justice Pearson and Mr. B. L. Mitter.
- 17 July do. Chingleput District Conference held at Madurantakam presided over by Mr. O. K. Chetti.
- 19 July do. Big public meeting at Poona under Mr. J. S. Karandikar to open an intensive Swadeshi and Boycott campaign in Maharashtra
- 21 July do. Joint Select Committee meeting on the Reserve Bank Bill resumed its sitting in Calcutta—the popular party's scheme on the constitution of the directorate of the Bank won in the Committee by a majority of one vote.  
Bengal Boarding Schools Bill published in Calcutta—object of the bill is to empower certain classes of magistrates to detain adolescent offenders in such schools instead of sentencing them in the ordinary way to imprisonment.  
Punjab Council—motion for the release of political prisoners rejected.  
Memorial submitted by influential moslem leaders to the Bengal Governor praying for an open enquiry into the Kulkati incident.
- 22 July do. Punjab Council members representing Sikh, Hindu and Muslim communities issued manifesto condemning the riots, assaults and murders prevailing in the province.
- 23 July do. The Wireless Beam station opened at Bombay by H. E. the Viceroy.  
Fifth Railway Passengers' Conference held at Madras under Dr. C. Rama Rau.  
Punjab Muslim Council Members under Hon. Malik Feroz Khan Noon issued manifesto thoroughly disapproving the joint electorate scheme.
- 24 July do. Continuous downpour of torrential rain unprecedented within living memory commenced from this day and continued for a week in Ahmedabad causing dislocation in Railway traffic and havoc in adjoining villages—Several thousand houses collapsed rendering 40 thousand homeless.
- 26 July do. First Session of the Madras Provincial Labour Conference under the auspices of the Trade Union movement with the object of reviving the provincial committees held at Madras presided over by Mr. N. M. Joshi.
- 27 July do. Bombay Council—The Bombay University Bill passed the first reading and referred to a select committee.  
Inauguration of an All-India campaign at a Bombay meeting under Mrs. Naidu with the slogan "Respect all religious prophets".
- 28 July do. Police raid in newspaper offices in Calcutta and Bombay—literatures on China and Communism seized.

## August 1927.

- 1 Aug. '27 Seventh Death Anniversary of Lokmanaya Tilak celebrated throughout—Nation's reverential homage to the High Priest of Nationalism.
- 2 Aug. do. Serious Hindu-Moslem riot at Bettiah in Bihar arising over a Hindu Sabha procession resulted in eight casualties (7 Moslems and 1 Hindu) and in several persons being injured.  
Nagpur Congress Committee revived the Satyagraha Campaign from this day—As a result 50 Volunteers with swords and spears were out in procession.

- 3 Aug. '27 Mr. Satyendra Chandra Mitra arrested under Regulation III on Oct 25, 1924 released unconditionally from Mandalay Jail.  
Mr. Satyamurti as President of Tinnevely District Conference urged Congress Unity as the need of the hour and denounced Communal Swaraj worse than dyaichy.
- 5 Aug. do. Hoogly District Conference under the presidency of Mr. T. C. Goswami—President's masterly analysis of the present political situation in the country.  
Public Meeting at Bombay under Sir P. Thakurdas condemned the Government's dilatory attitude and urged it to give immediate effect to the recommendations of the Skeen Committee.  
A deputation of the Non-Brahmin members of the Bombay Council waited upon the Governor at Poona and urged the increased representation of the community in the Services.
- 6 Aug. do. "Ria's Vairtan" Case—Judgment pronounced on this day by the Lahore High Court convicting both the accused to rigorous imprisonment.  
The C. P. and Berar Provincial Hindu Sabha Conference held at Nagpur under Sir Saukaran Nair pleaded for inter-cast fusion and supported Joint Endorser.  
Executive Meeting of the Hindu Mahasabha after four days' deliberations within closed doors passed resolution condemning the publication of communal literatures.  
Calcutta's Hero-Worship in the second death anniversary meeting of Sir Surendra Nath Banerjee under Sir C. C. Ghose.
- 8 Aug. do. Annual Meeting of the Shareholders of the Imperial Bank of India in Calcutta to consider their position with reference to the creation of a Reserve Bank for India.  
The Silver Jubilee of the reign of H. H. the Maharaja of Mysore celebrated with unbounded loyalty and devotion by his subjects all over the State.
- 9 Aug. do. London Indians' indignant protest against a book called "Mother India" written by one Mrs. Nathem Mayo, an American tourist which indulged in wholesale and indiscriminate vilification of Indian civilisation and Indian character—The book was held as propagandist work to discredit India in view of the forthcoming Statutory Commission.
- 10 Aug. do. People's Party in the Burma Council issued manifesto urging enquiry into the Burma Reforms
- 12 Aug. do. Scurrilous attack on Indian womanhood by Mr. Pilcher in a news-article in the "Statesman" of Calcutta—Defamation charges brought against the Editor of the paper subsequently ended in the acquittal of the accused.
- 13 Aug. do. Second Session of the All-India Press Employees' Conference held at Calcutta under the presidency of Hon. S. Mohd. Palsha Saheb.
- 14 Aug. do. Coimbatore District Non-Brahmin Conference held at Truppur under the presidency of Sir M. C. T. Muthiah Chettiar.  
Adjourned Meeting of the Bengal Muslim League Council held at Calcutta under Sir Abdur Rahim passed important resolutions
- 15 Aug. do. Vehement protest against the inhuman and brutal atrocities by frontier Muslim tribesmen over the Hindu inhabitants of the Frontier recorded in a crowded public meeting in Calcutta under Mr. B. C. Pal.
- 17 Aug. do. Dr. Ansari's remarkable statement to the press, on the eve of his election to the presidentship of the Congress, assailing the policy pursued by Congressmen in the Legislatures and advocating direct action as was done in the Non-co-operation days.  
Coimbatore Mill Strike continued till 24th when labour leaders were arrested.  
The Public Accounts Committee of the Legislative Assembly commenced its sittings in Simla.
- 7 Aug. do. Opening of the C. P. Legislative Council—Governor in his address pleaded for Communal Unity.
- 18 Aug. do. Opening of the Autumn Session of the Third Legislative Assembly at Simla—Select Committee Report on the Gold Standard Reserve Bank Bill with the Minutes of Dissent presented to the Assembly by Sir Basil Blackett.

- 19 Aug. '72 Secretary of State announced the acceptance of the India Government's proposals regarding the Sh. a Report.
- 21 Aug. do. Hindu-Muslim fracas ending in some casualties took place at Comilla while a Janmastami procession was passing by a mosque.
- 21 Aug. do. Khilafat Conference in Calcutta presided over by Moul. Mahomed Ali Uged mutual toleration between Hindus and Moslems regarding religious matters and work for the liberation of the Motherland.
- 23 Aug. do. Arms Act Satyagraha in Nagpur leading to a clash with the police who were injured—13 men and 4 lady Satyagrahis arrested
- 24 Aug. do. Opening of the Bengal Legislative Council in Calcutta—The Governor in his address reaffirmed the policy outlined in the Assembly by Sir A. Muddiman regarding the Bengal detenus.—During interpellations Ministers heckled on the question of the condition of Detenus.
- 24 Aug. do. The Bill to amend the Indian Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code to penalise insult to religion introduced in the Assembly.
- 25 Aug. do. The Bengal Council—The Swarajist motion of "No-confidence" in the Ministers carried—The Ministers resigned.
- 27 Aug. do. The Pearson-Mitter Enquiry Committee report into the allegations of the European Association regarding the political activities of the Y M C A. published—The Committee found no evidence in support of the allegations.
- 28 Aug. do. Police raid in Howrah—Bomb-shells, explosives and revolvers seized—three persons arrested.
- 28 Aug. do. Bombay Non-Brahmin Conference passed conditional entry of Non-Brahmins in the Congress.
- 28 Aug. do. Unequivocal condemnation in all parts of India of the mean and vulgar Attack on Indian womanhood by Miss Mayo in her book "Mother India".
- 29 Aug. do. Serious communal riot in Bareilly—Heavy casualties—Prominent persons made special constables.
- 30 Aug. do. The Viceroy's Address to the Joint Session of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly at Simla
- 30 Aug. do. Motion for consideration of the Reserve Bank Bill made by Sir B. Blackett in the Assembly.
- 30 Aug. do. Cotton Yarn Bill imposing duty on one and half annas per pound on imported yarn passed by the Select Committee at Simla.
- 31 Aug. do. Members of the Unity Conference at Simla issued Manifesto appealing to all communities to maintain calm atmosphere as a means to bring about lasting unity between all communities.
- 31 Aug. do. All-India Swadeshi and Industrial Exhibition opened at Poona by the Hon. Mr. Harilal Desai.

## September 1927.

- 2 Sept. '27 Debate on the Reserve Bank Bill adjourned in the Assembly.
- 3 Sept. do. Behar Council—No-confidence resolution against Mr. G. D. Singh, Minister defeated by 17 votes.
- 4 Sept. do. Serious communal riot at Nagpur arising out of a moslem procession of 2000 peoples molesting a Hindu passerby—There were heavy casualties—Military paraded the streets.
- 4 Sept. do. Monster public meeting held in Calcutta under Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta to protest against Miss Mayo's and Mr. Pilcher's attack on Indian womanhood calling them "Sluts at home and prostitutes abroad."
- 4 Sept. do. At a general meeting of the Reception Committee of the ensuing Indian National Congress held at Madras Dr. Ansari was elected President by a large majority.
- 5 Sept. do. Communal disturbance at Nagpur arising out of a Muslim procession celebrating the death of a Moslem killed in the communal troubles of 1924 coming into conflict with Hindus—22 died, over 100 injured.



- 7 Sept. '27 The Unity Conference meeting at Simla appointed Committee to prepare agenda for the Conference.  
The Neill Statue Satyagraha in Madras—Volunteers after conversation with Mahatma Gandhi decided to continue the struggle in a non-violent spirit. Representative Deputation under Sir P. Thakurdas waited on the Viceroy in connection with the East African situation.
- 8 Sept. do. Sir Basil Blackett's surprising announcement in the Assembly postponing the Reserve Bank Bill owing to the failure of agreement on the question of directorate—Congress Party members walked out in protest.  
Inaugural meeting of the Aero Club of India held at Simla under the presidency of Sir Victor Sassoon.
- 9 Sept. do. Mr. C. R. Das's portrait unveiled in the Madras Mahajan Sabha by Mahatma Gandhi—the Mahatma in paying tribute discoursed on politics and spirituality.  
The Y. M. C. A. & Politics—In view of the Pearson-Mitter Committee Report the Council of the European Association in a meeting in Calcutta did not consider that there was sufficient reason for calling a meeting of the Association to modify or rescind its resolution of the 18th February.
- 10 Sept. do. Lala Lajpat Rai's forceful appeal in an Untouchability Conference held in Simla to cast away the horrible practice.  
Communal Riot in Sholapur—5 killed, 100 injured.
- 11 Sept. do. Hindu-Muslim fracas at Ahmedabad arising out of a party of moslems coming in conflict with song and religious discourse in a temple adjoining a mosque during prayer time.
- 12 Sept. do. The Kharagpur Labour crisis—Declaration of lock-out by the B. N. Ry. authorities in their workshops—ten thousand men affected.
- 14 Sept. do. The Koran desecration Case of Sylhet—Assam Council passed resolution demanding dismissal of the police officer who committed the act.
- 15 Sept. do. Mahatma Gandhi in an article in "Young India" characterised Miss Mayo's Book "Mother India" as a "Drain Inspector's Report".
- 16 Sept. do. The Unity Committee at Simla held sittings till 22nd when it broke up owing to no conclusions having been reached on cow and music questions—divergent statements of the Secretaries and the Muslim Members issued subsequently.  
The Bill to penalise insult to religion passed in the Assembly.
- 17 Sept. do. A representative deputation waited on the Viceroy at Simla in connection with the Feetham Report which recommended drastic curtailment of Indian representation in Municipal Council in East Africa.
- 18 Sept. do. Big public meeting at Madras demanding the removal of the Neill Statue from public view and sympathising with the Satyagraha movement.
- 22 Sept. do. The Unity Conference at Simla broke up on its failure to arrive at a concordant on the question of cow-slaughter and music before mosque.
- 24 Sept. do. Ramnad District Conference held under the presidency of Mr. Satyamurti urged communal unity and abolition of separate electorates.
- 26 Sept. do. Muslim Members' statement issued on the failure of the Unity Conference at Simla.
- 28 Sept. do. Attack on the Rambila procession by Kabuli Mahomedans at Dehra Dun—2 dead and 26 wounded—peace restored after curfew order issued by the District Magistrate.

## October 1927.

- 1 Oct. '27 Eleventh Session of the Nadars' Provincial Conference held at Kumbakonam under the presidency of R. K. Shanmugham Chettiar.
- 2 Oct. do. Owing to the tense communal feeling prevailing in Punjab mass meeting of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs was held at Ambala under Mr. Manilal Kothari who appealed to all to settle down to the normal relations of peace and harmony and thus help attainment of Swaraj.

- 6 Oct. '27 Kharagpur labour strike continued—Government statement issued upholding the retrenchment policy of the Railway authorities. No-tax in Bardoh—the agriculturists at a meeting at Funi resolved not to pay the enhanced revenue assessment.
- 7 Oct. do. The Labour Conference at Blackpool passed resolutions advocating self-determination for India and urging release of Bengal Detenus.
- 10 Oct. do. Special session of the Kathiawar Political Conference held at Rajkot to protest against the customs cordon of the States.
- 25 Oct. do. Mammoth meetings held in Calcutta and Howrah to celebrate the 'Detenus' day.
- 26 Oct. do. The fourth anniversary of "Forward", the Swarajist organ founded by Deshbandhu Das, celebrated with great enthusiasm in Calcutta.
- 27 Oct. do. Representative gathering in the Unity Conference held in Calcutta on this and the next day—resolutions on religious conversions and music before mosque and the cow question accepted by both the communities.
- 28 Oct. do. Important session of the All-India Congress Committee held on this and the next two days—The Unity Conference resolution and the policy of the Madras Swarajists discussed—Dr. Das Gupta's resolution on religious conversion adopted.  
The U. P. Christian Conference held at Allahabad under the presidency of Mr. J. M. David passed resolution among others condemning the communal electorates.  
Special session of the All-India Railwaymen's Conference held at Kharagpur under Mr. V. V. Giri who deplored the retrenchment in the railways and threatened general strike unless retrenchment is abandoned.
- 29 Oct. do. Second Day of the A. I. C. C. Session in Calcutta—Resolutions on cow and music and the Bengal Detenus passed.  
The U. P. Council—The 'Nak Giris' Protection Bill received a hearty welcome from all quarters of the house.
- 30 Oct. do. The National Council of Y. M. C. A. in a statement issued from Calcutta repudiated the accusation that the association were developing an political lines and re-affirmed its policy eschewing politics from its programme.
- 31 Oct. do. The interview of the Viceroy with prominent leaders invited by him commenced from this day at Delhi.

## November 1927.

- 1 Nov. '27 Police Raid in Calcutta and Dacca—A number of houses searched—revolutionary conspiracy suspected.  
U. P. Council—Resolution to remove Sex disqualification for women in regard to Election and nomination to the Council adopted unanimously.
- 4 Nov. do. The All-India Aryan Congress held at Delhi under the presidency of Lala Hansraj.  
The U. P. Council—an interesting resolution, asking Government to accept the convention that in matters concerning transferred departments the official members should abstain from voting, defeated.
- 8 Nov. do. The Viceroy's announcement on the Reforms Commission announced in New Delhi—An all British personnel, the Central and Provincial Legislature to be consulting bodies.—All-India protest voiced against the exclusion of Indians from the personnel of the Commission.  
House of Lords passed the 1st reading of the Statutory Commission Bill Amending Section 81 of the Government of India Act.
- 10 Nov. do. Congress President issued statement appealing for the complete boycott of the Statutory Commission.
- 12 Nov. do. Andhra Provincial Conference held at Aunatapur under Mr. D. Narayana Razu—Stirring Appeals made on resolutions on Neill Statue Satyagraha and Royal Commission.
- 14 Nov. do. Abdul Raschid, the murderer of S. Shradhananda hanged at Delhi—huge muslim crowd carried the body in a riotous procession in which 45 Hindus were alleged to have been injured.

- 15 Nov. '27 House of Lords passed the Second Reading of the Indian Statutory Commission Bill  
Labour Party in a Conference with Lord Birkenhead pressed for an assurance on the floor of Parliament of the fullest co-operation and consultation between the Statutory Commission and the Committee of Indian Legislatures.
- 16 Nov. do, Provincial Ministers' Conference held at New Delhi under Mr. James Crear to consider questions in connection with the re-organisation of the Provincial Services on the Transferred side.  
All Party Conference in Bombay under Sir C. Setalvad protested against the exclusion of Indians from the Statutory Commission and urged its boycott—Similar protest meeting held in Calcutta under Sir Abdur Rahim.  
All-India Leaders' statement issued from Bombay urged boycott of the Commission unless a Commission on which the British and Indian statesmen will sit on equal terms is set up.
- 17 Nov. do, The House of Lords passed the Third Reading of the Indian Statutory Commission Bill.
- 19 Nov. do, Independent Labour party at a meeting in London passed resolution strongly protesting against the exclusion of Indians from the Commission.  
Monster Meeting in Bombay under Sir Dinkar Petit urged boycott of the Commission—Similar meeting at Madras under Dr. U. Rama Rau called for the complete boycott of the Commission.
- 20 Nov. do, Pt. Motilal Nehru on behalf of the Congress asked Mr. Lansbury, the Labour Leader, to withdraw labour members from the Commission and desist from all efforts at compromise. "Nothing short of Full Responsible Government will satisfy the Congress."  
Punjab Muslim League's resolution disapproving the boycott of the Commission passed by the local Khilafat Committee.  
Maharashtra Prov. Congress Committee held at Pan under Mr. L. B. Bhopalkar urged boycott of the Commission among other resolutions.  
The Council of the All-India Muslim League held at Delhi decided to hold the next session at Lahore.
- 22 Nov. do, The Bihar Khilafat Conference, the U. P. Liberal Association and the Bombay Non-Brahmin Party, all passed resolutions favouring complete boycott of the Parliamentary Commission.  
Second Reading of the Reform Bill in the Commons passed—Mr. Saklatvala's rejection motion defeated.  
All Party meeting at Lucknow under Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru urged boycott of the Commission.
- 23 Nov. do, In the Committee Stage of the Statutory Commission Bill Mr. Saklatvala's Amendment providing that the Commission be not appointed until the Assembly approved the appointment negatived owing to Labour's obstructive tactics.  
The Statutory Commission Bill passed the Third Reading in the Commons and the Royal Assent given.
- 24 Nov. do, Personnel of the Indian Statutory Commission—Lord Birkenhead's statement in the Lords approved *Nem Con*—Labour not to withdraw Commissioners.  
Parliamentary Labour Party under Mr. Macdonald decided not to withdraw labour members from the Commission if equal powers were given to the Committee of the Indian Legislatures.  
Pt. Nehru's letter to all members of the Labour Party expressing surprise at the Labour official co-operation describing it as an "insult to India."
- 25 Nov. do, The European Association at its Annual Meeting in Calcutta opined that the Parliamentary Commission was likely to do more service to India than a mixed commission.  
Earl Winterton's statement carried in the Commons on the appointment of the Commission—Mr. Macdonald's apology for labour participation—Mr. Saklatvala's amendment to invite Pt. Motilal Nehru to the Bar of the House negatived.  
U. P. Political Conference held at Aligarh under the presidency of Mr. G. B. Pant.

- 26 Nov. '27 The All India Trade Union Congress held at Cawnpore under Dewan Chamanlal—Motion for Labour Enquiry Commission passed.
- 30 Nov. do. At a meeting of Moslems held at Cawnpore Mr. Hasrat Mohani moved a resolution urging the settlement of the Moslem claim as a condition precedent to the Boycott of the Commission.
- Indian and European Chambers' joint representation to the Burma Government urging abolition of the Capitation Tax.

## December 1927.

- 1 Dec. '27 Boycott Committee inaugurated by Dr. Mrs. Besant—the Committee to keep boycott on right lines but to eschew civil disobedience and similar mass movements.
- 2 Dec. do. Women's meeting in Bombay under Mrs. Sarojini Naidu urged concerted boycott of the Commission.
- The British Section of the League against Imperialism disapproved labour participation in the Commission.
- 7 Dec. do. A manifesto issued by prominent Lahore Muslims stated that an equitable adjustment of intercommunal differences was an essential prerequisite of a common programme and urged muslims in particular not to boycott the commission, the doing of which will bring shame and sorrow to muslims.
- 8 Dec. do. The protracted strike in the B. N. Railway workshop at Kharagpur terminated—Workshops re-opened.
- 11 Dec. do. All Party meeting held at Allahabad under the presidency of Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya to boycott the forthcoming Simon Commission.
- The Council of the All-India Muslim League held at Delhi decided to hold the next Session of the League in Calcutta.
- 13 Dec. do. Annual meeting of the Madras Chamber of Commerce held at Madras under the presidency of Mr. C. E. Wood.
- 16 Dec. do. Annual Conference of the European Association in Calcutta under Mr. C. B. Charters.
- 17 Dec. do. The States' Subjects' Conference held at Bombay under the presidency of Mr. M. Ramchandra Rao.
- 19 Dec. do. Annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce held in Calcutta under the presidency of Mr. Eddis.
- 25 Dec. do. Kenya Indian Congress held at Nairobi condemned the recommendations of the Fritham Commission as well as the administration of the Governor.
- 26 Dec. do. Opening of the Indian National Congress at Madras under the presidency of Dr. M. A. Ansari.
- 27 Dec. do. The All-India Liberal Federation opened at Bombay under the presidency of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.
- 28 Dec. do. Indian Industrial and Commercial Congress held at Madras under the presidency Sir Ibrahim Rahimtulla.
- 29 Dec. do. Death of Hakim Ajmal Khan, the well-known Physician and nationalist of Delhi—A. I. C. C. meeting held at Madras after the Congress session passed condolence resolution on the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan.
- 20 Dec. do. All-India Muslim League held at Calcutta under the presidency of Mr. Mohammed Yakub.
- The All-India Christian Conference held at Allahabad under the presidency of Mr. B. L. Ballia Ram.
- 31 Dec. do. Annual meeting of the Indian Chamber of Commerce held at Madras under Sir Dinshaw Petit—Annual Report for 1927 presented.
- Rival Session of the All-India Muslim League held at Lahore under the presidency of Sir Mian Muhammad Shafi.

India in Home Polity

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## REPORT OF THE All-India Congress Committee.

The following is the annual report for the year 1927 presented by the General Secretaries to the All-India Congress Committee and subsequently to the Madras Congress in December 1927.

"Article XXIII of the Congress Constitution requires the Secretaries to 'prepare the report of the work of the All-India Congress Committee during the year and submit it, with a full account of the funds which may come into their hands, to the All-India Congress Committee at a meeting to be held at the place and about the time of the session of the Congress for the year'. We have pleasure to submit this report accordingly.

"Since the last session of the Congress, there have been three meetings of the All-India Congress Committee including the one which was held at Gaubati immediately after the Congress concluded its proceedings. At this meeting the Committee, in compliance with the statutory provisions, elected members to the Working Committee and to the Election Disputes Panel.

"The next meeting was an important one and had a prolonged session at Bombay. The decisions made at this session covered a wide range of subjects—from the International Congress against Imperialism and Colonial Oppression and for National Independence to domestic matters like the Congress Party's conduct in the Councils—and included the despatch of a Medical Mission to China, the framing of a Swaraj Constitution and the solution of the vexed question of Hindu-Muslim differences. The Committee also placed on record its high appreciation of the meritorious services rendered by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who represented the Indian National Congress at the International Congress which was organised by the League against Imperialism, and who by his ardent patriotism and untiring energy secured for this country an elevated place in the Councils of the League.

"At the instance of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Committee resolved at the Bombay meeting to recommend to the Congress to give support to the League against Imperialism as an associate organisation.

"As regards the Swaraj Constitution, the Committee called upon the Working Committee to prepare a draft, based on a Declaration of Rights, in consultation with the elected members of the Central and Provincial Legislatures and other leaders of political parties. Accordingly, the office placed itself in communication with present and past members of Legislatures and other prominent persons, a few of whom have sent in some suggestions. Drafts are in course of preparation and will, in due course, come up for discussion.

"The Hindu-Muslim differences and the means that have to be devised to establish unity have continued to be the most absorbing subjects before the country and the Congress. Since the last Congress which met under the shadow of a national calamity owing to the brutal assassination of the great Swami Shraddhananda of revered memory, the tension between the two great communities in the land has grown from bad to worse. Murders and murderous assaults had blackened the fair name of the motherland and

the need for a prompt solution of the problem was imperative. The Committee, therefore, addressed itself to the question in a spirit of justice, humanity and true patriotism. The political issues involved were dealt with at the Bombay meeting on the lines of the proposals contained in the report and resolutions of the Working Committee, and the All-India Congress Committee re-announced the principle of redistribution of Provinces on a linguistic basis and recommended, as an initial step, the application of the principle to Andhra, Sind and Karnatak. The system of communal representation was definitely discarded and, instead, joint electorates were substituted, due provision being made for the protection of minorities by way of reservation of seats.

"At this meeting, as has been mentioned above, the conduct of the Congress Party in the Madras Legislative Council was also discussed and was referred to the Working Committee which was authorized to call for an explanation from the Party and submit the same for consideration at the next meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. The resolutions adopted by the Working Committee which met in Bombay immediately after the All-India Congress Committee, on this particular matter and on the general policy to be pursued by Congress Parties in the Legislative Councils, led to a difference of opinion among Congressmen as a result of which a requisition signed by over 30 members of the All-India Congress Committee calling for a special meeting of the Committee at Calcutta not later than the 15th of July was addressed to the President. For various reasons, including the inconvenience felt by Congressmen engaged in municipal elections in Madras, the sitting of the Madras Legislative Council and the illness of the President, the meeting had to be postponed from time to time and could only be held at Calcutta on the 28th of October.

"At this meeting, the other points of dispute involved in the Hindu-Muslim tension, namely social and religious, were taken up for consideration. And a working compromise was reached, owing to the co-operation of leaders of both the communities from different parts of the country. Prior to the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, a Unity Conference had been convened by the President at Calcutta on the 26th October. The Conference sat for long hours on the 26th and on the following day and after full and frank discussion, was able to arrive at compromise formulæ which were subsequently adopted with suitable alterations by the All-India Congress Committee. It must be mentioned here that some of the leaders were obliged to be absent from the Conference and from the All-India Congress Committee. It should also be admitted that the compromise resolutions passed at Calcutta have met with adverse criticism in some quarters. Nevertheless, it may be hoped that the terms of agreement will provide the basis on which a "via media" between conflicting points of view can be laid down which will help to restore that peace and good-will between the two great communities of this ancient land, which is so essential for the early establishment of Swaraj.

"Thus the solution of the outstanding political, social and religious problems connected with the Hindu-Muslim differences was sought to be arrived at at the Bombay and Calcutta meetings in a spirit of give and take. Some of the decisions might not be final and may require fuller examination and final decision by the Congress; in fact, the All-India Congress Committee itself which arrived at these decisions resolved to bring up some of them

before this meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and the Congress' and we have no doubt that any alterations that will be found necessary to improve upon the terms of compromise and render them more acceptable to all parties concerned will be made at the coming session.

"The Bombay meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, as has been stated above, resolved to show its sympathy in a practical way with the people of China who were struggling for freedom, and called upon the All-India Board of the Hindustani Seva Dal to take all necessary steps in connection with the despatch of an Ambulance Corps to that country. But the British bureaucracy in India would not permit even this humanitarian work to be undertaken by or on behalf of the Congress, and it employed all manner of dilatory tactics in dealing with the Dal President Mr. Goswami's communications on the subject. The Congress and the Dal have thus been prevented from doing their little service to a sister nation who, like ours, is fighting for her freedom.

"Another subject of importance which was dealt with by the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay was the boycott of British goods, intended as a measure of practical protest against the continued incarceration of Bengal Detenus. We are sorry to say that not much headway has been made in this direction. It will be remembered that in pursuance of the resolution of the Special Session of the Congress held in Delhi in 1923, a report was submitted by the Sub-Committee to the Congress at Cocanada giving a list of the articles that could easily be boycotted immediately.

"There has been also another movement set on foot to compel the Government to deal justly with the hundreds of patriots whose liberties have been trampled under foot under the lawless law of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act 1925, and under Regulation III of 1818, namely the Nagpur Satyagraha. It is worthy of note that this movement as well as other movements like the Madura Arms Act and the Madras Neill Statue Satyagraha have been singularly marked by perfect non-violence.

"The All-India Congress Committee, while in session at Bombay, received the glad tidings of the release of Syt. Subhas Chandra Bose and rejoiced at his restoration to liberty, to take his place again in the fight for the nation's freedom. But there are still a great many more of patriots rotting behind the prison walls and otherwise deprived of their liberties. The Committee, therefore, appointed a Sub Committee at Calcutta to devise means for expediting the release of the detenus with Syt. Satyendra Chandra Mitra, another patriot who had suffered imprisonment, as convener of the Sub-Committee. The report of the Sub-Committee will come up before this meeting and it is hoped that the Committee will address itself to this all important question and resolve upon such a plan of action as will wrest the freedom of the flower of Bengal from an obstinate bureaucracy.

"The Working Committee, as usual, has been meeting from time to time. Besides the meeting at Gauhati which was held immediately after the Congress the Committee informally met at Calcutta soon after i.e., on the 1st January. Meetings of the Committee were frequently held during the pendency of the Assembly session at Delhi in January, February and March when the Committee discussed mainly the Hindu-Muslim question, the Currency Bill and the Chinese situation. It subsequently met in May last at Bombay and, as has been stated above, went thoroughly into the questions outstanding between Hindus and Musalmans and submitted its report and draft resolutions



to the All-India Congress Committee under Resolution IX of the Gauhati Congress. The report could not be ready by the 31st March as required under the Gauhati resolution, in view of the fact that the President had to carry on prolonged consultations with leading Hindu and Mohammedan members of the Assembly and the Council of State in Delhi as well as other leaders.

"The last meeting of the Working Committee was held in Calcutta on the 28th October, on the eve of the All-India Congress Committee. At this meeting the Committee, besides framing draft resolutions for adoption by the All-India Congress Committee on the basis of the Hindu Muslim Unity Conference discussions, resolved to sanction Rs. 500 as a token of its sympathy with the people of Orissa in their distress caused by the recent floods in that unhappy land.

"The Working Committee, in accordance with the resolution on Hindu-Muslim Unity adopted by the All-India Congress Committee at Calcutta, passed by circulation a resolution appointing a Committee representative of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs for the purpose of carrying on propaganda along the lines indicated in the said resolution of the All-India Congress Committee.

"The Working Committee also considered the situation created by the announcement of the appointment of the Parliamentary Commission and adopted the following resolution by circulation :—

"As the British Government has constituted the Statutory Commission in defiance of the national will and rejected the national demand for a Round Table Conference to settle a Swaraj Constitution for India, the Working Committee of the Congress calls upon the people of India and appeals to all political parties to abstain from co-operating with the said Commission either by giving evidence or by voting for or serving on any Select Committee connected therewith."

"The Commission has been universally condemned as a negation of the fundamental right of self-determination which is inherent in every nation. The Congress will, no doubt, devise, in consultation with other organisations in the country, a concerted plan of action with a view to bend the British Government to the nation's will unanimously expressed through the National Congress.

"Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, the All-India Spinners Association has, during 1926-27 which is the second year of its existence, made "general progress" which, as the Association's report says "is marked not so much in the increased figures of khadi production and sale although such progress is to be found in some of the provinces but rather in the improvement in the quality of yarn and cloth towards which the efforts of many of the organisations in the several provinces were in the main directed during a large part of the year as also in the evolving of disciplined organisations in some of the less organised provinces and the bringing of all their centres under a proper system of business efficiency." The returns received at the Central office of the Association show that *Khaddar* of the value of Rs. 23,59,067 has been produced and the sale-proceeds amount to Rs. 32,52,854 during the year under report. Mahatmaji has undertaken, in spite of serious illness, tours in Karnatak, Tamil Nadu and Ceylon. It is a matter for especial gratification to note that his tour throughout these provinces including the States of Mysore, Travancore and Cochin has been marked by signal success. The warm and spontaneous reception that greeted him everywhere, the generous response which was made to his appeal for Khadi funds and the unbounded enthusiasm that has been aroused in the hearts of the public for the cause of

*Davidra Narayan*, the God in the lowly and the distressed, give the lie direct to the self-complacent allegation of the enemies of this country that Mahatma's influence over the masses has diminished. In far off Ceylon, all the communities, including the Burghers, vied with one another in according him royal reception and giving of their best to the cause of the downtrodden and the depressed, of which he is the living embodiment. In a poor country like ours, only Mahatma Gandhi could collect spontaneous donations amounting to Rs. 3 and half lakhs during a few months' tour.

"The Karnatak Board of the Hindustani Seva Dal has good work to its credit during the year under report, having enlisted 6658 Congress members and 91 Dal members.

"Reports of work done in all the provinces having not yet been received but so far only Maharashtra, Karnatak, Behar, Gujarat, C. P. Marathi and Bombay have forwarded them. The Maharashtra P. C. C. states that the total number of Congress members in the province is about 2,400. In the Colaba and Bombay Suburban Districts of this province, vigorous efforts have been made to carry on a campaign against the payment of increased land assessment. It should be noted here that the President, during his extensive tour in Maharashtra in May last, personally studied the movement in Alibag for refusing to pay the enhanced land assessment and after convincing himself of the justice of the movement, gave it every encouragement. Active propaganda work against the drink evil has also been done in these districts. In Karnatak 6658 Congress members were enrolled during the year by the exertions of the Seva Dal mentioned above. The report received from four Districts in Behar shows that 2,220 Congress members were registered in those Districts. In Gujarat only 270 were enlisted during the current year as against 651 last year. But this was due to the fact that Gujarat experienced a terrible calamity in the deluge that swept over the province. It is gratifying to note, however, that the Provincial Congress Committee rose to the occasion and put forth almost superhuman efforts to bring relief to the flood-stricken and starving millions. The people made a splendid response to the appeal for funds and a sum of Rs. 6,22,982 was collected for flood relief. Relief operations are still being carried on. Rs. 82,440 were collected and ear-marked for the depressed classes in Gujarat. C. P. Marathi reports only 1564 members for this year as against 3610 of last year.

"The Bombay province has on its rolls 4248 members including 14 who have enlisted themselves in the A. I. S. A.

"We have this year again to advert to the unsatisfactory financial position of the All-India Congress Committee, which will be evident from a perusal of the audited statement of T. S. F. accounts annexed hereto. We must also reiterate the urgent need for collecting funds for efficient organization of Congress work and for the upkeep of the Central Office. As we said last year, the amount required for this purpose will by no means be large, and we earnestly invite the prompt attention of the All-India Congress Committee to this vital need of the Congress Secretariat. We suggest in this connection, that funds should be collected and ear-marked for the purpose and the support of the public enlisted in this behalf."

MADRAS,  
15th December 1927.

{ M. A. ANSARI,  
VALLABHBHAI J. PATEL,  
A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR.

[*Note.*—As Working General Secretary of the Congress during the last two years who will be vacating his office this year, I may be permitted to say one word as to the need for placing the Congress Secretariat on a permanent footing. The frequent changes in the headquarters of the A. I. C. C. Office, which the present system imposes, involves an amount of expenditure and dislocation of business which may well be avoided. I would suggest that the office may be put in charge of a permanent paid Secretary and be located at some central place where he should carry on the ordinary routine work of the Congress organisation throughout the year, while the General Secretaries annually elected would be placed in a position to guide and control the office and carry out the policy and programme laid down by the Congress at its annual session, as also in accordance with the resolutions and directions of the All-India Congress Committee and the Working Committee.

I would also once again urge the restoration of the amount of the delegation fee of each delegate to Rs. 10. Its reduction to the nominal figure of Re. 1 has rendered and will render the task of Reception Committees of the less prosperous provinces difficult and hazardous, and accentuate the position of dependence of the A. I. C. C. on the fastly thinning balances of the Tilak Swaraj Fund. It is also necessary, I think, to restore the membership fee of A. I. C. C. members and to give effect to the statutory provision contained in Art. IX of the Congress Constitution and to ask each Provincial Congress Committee to make an annual contribution to the central fund.

A. Rangaswami Iyengar.]

## Proceedings of the Calcutta Meeting.

The requisition meeting of the All-India Congress Committee commenced at Calcutta in the Albert Hall on the 28th October 1927 under the presidency of Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, President of the Indian National Congress. There were present about fifty members of the Congress Committee and a similar number of visitors. At the outset, the President explained the circumstances under which the holding of the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee was adjourned from time to time. The President further stated that this meeting was held in pursuance of a requisition signed by several members of the All-India Congress Committee.

Among those who attended the meeting were Maulanas Abul Kalam Azad, Mahomed Ali, Shaukat Ali, Pandit Gopebandhu Das, Mr. Tulsi Charan Goswami, Moulana Abdul Bari, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar, Mr. V. V. Jogiah, Mr. T. Prakasam, Moulana Mahomed Shafi, Dr. Biswanath Mookerjee, Babu Bagavan Das of Benares, Pandit Nilkantha Das, Mr. Lalit Mohan Das, Mr. Satyendra Chandra Mitra, Mr. S. Jairamdas Daulatram, Dr. Nand Lal, Babu Purshottamdas Rai, Dr. Pratap Chandra Guha Roy, Mr. C. F. Andrews, Sreemati Urmila Debi, and Sreemati Subbamma Debi.

### Congress and Madras Politics.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar then read the requisition which stated that the Working Committee instructed the Congress party in several Provincial Legislatures that their duty under clause (a) of the resolution of the Gauhati

Congress was to prevent the functioning of diarchy as such wherever possible and did not impose on them to defeat a Ministry if the result of such an action was in the judgment of the party likely to strengthen the bureaucracy and was of opinion that it was desirable for the party to co-operate with each other for the purpose of carrying out the Congress policy and (2) that having heard all about the conduct of the Congress party in the Madras Council the Working Committee was convinced that the party had done nothing consistent either with the ultimate object of the Congress, the attainment of Swaraj, or with the spirit and letter of the Gauhati resolution, as in its judgment there was no probability of wrecking diarchy in that province at that time but that on the other hand it had done all that lay in its power to prevent the strengthening of diarchy by means of an alliance with a party whose avowed policy was to promote communalism and to repress nationalism for the purpose of securing office at the hands of the bureaucracy. The Working Committee made it clear that in no case should the party in the Council resort to such co-operation and (3) to consider the desirability of convening a special session of the Indian National Congress to consider future policy and programme.

The requisition led to a heated debate. Mr. Viswanath urged the withdrawal of Clause (2).

Mr. Rajkumar Chakravarthi said that, in view of the approach of the Congress in Madras, consideration of the interpretation of the Gauhati resolution should be postponed till the next A. I. C. C. at Madras.

Mr. T. Prakasam suggested that the first part of the resolution be formally moved.

Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta said that this was a special meeting convened in pursuance of a requisition, so the resolution must either be moved or dropped. He proposed that the whole resolution might be dropped. He said that having regard to lapse of time, and having regard to what had happened in Madras since the notice of this meeting was given it was futile for them now to go and consider this question. He reminded the House of their programme in the Councils. He fought tooth and nail to oppose any quarter being given to any Ministry in any Council and was one of the staunchest Swarajists in throwing out the Ministry in company with any other party or parties, however antagonistic they might be. It was futile for them now to pass a resolution of condemnation and he hoped that the consideration of the resolution might be postponed.

Mr. B. G. Horniman wanted to speak and asked the President not to allow this matter to be voted upon unless the matter was thoroughly discussed. The President regretted that it was too late for Mr. Horniman to suggest a further discussion.

The resolution of Mr. Sen Gupta was carried. The following is the text:—

#### 1.—Requisition *re* Wg. C. Resolution.

"That the consideration of the matter raised in the requisition for this meeting *re* Working Committee's resolution on the conduct of the Congress Party in the Madras Legislative Council be dropped".

#### 2.—Bihar and Orissa Flood.

Mr. T. Prakasam moved the following resolution:—

"That the A. I. C. C. condemns the callously minimising attitude of the Government of Bihar and Orissa with regard to the recent flood disaster in

Balasore and Cuttack districts of Orissa. It warmly congratulates the different voluntary societies which have done such splendid service in saving the poorest of the poor in the districts from utter privation. It commends the work of the reconstruction on behalf of the distressed families as a national work of immediate importance, notifying the fact that the greatest sufferers were the families of the depressed classes. It calls the public attention to the appeal made by Pandit Gopa Bandhu Das and Mr. C. F. Andrews whose service in the cause of the famine-stricken in Orissa it gratefully acknowledges."

He said that it was well-known what Mr. Andrews and Pandit Gopa Bandhu Das had done regarding the great distress that had overtaken the province. He hoped that the resolution would command unanimous support.

Mr. Subash Chandra Bose seconded the resolution.

Pandit Gopa Bandhu Das said that, if anybody visited the flood-stricken area, he would not bear the sight of it. Orissa, he said, was a problem in Indian politics not only on account of its dismemberment but on account of its annual floods. It was for the Indian National Congress to help the struggling people of Orissa.

The resolution was carried. The President announced that the Working Committee had resolved to contribute Rs. 500 towards the Flood Relief Fund.

### 3. — Kharagpur Deadlock.

Mr. T. C. Goswami moved the following resolution :—

"That the All-India Congress Committee expresses their deep sympathy with the Kharagpur strikers in their struggle against the grave injustice that had been done to a considerable section of the employees of the B. N. Railway and asked the whole country to stand by them and help them to vindicate their rights."

The resolution was duly seconded.

The President remarked that, as Government had not taken any steps in the matter, they could not but sufficiently condemn their action.

The resolution was carried.

### 4. — Punjab Communal Murders.

Dr. Ansari moved the following resolution :—

"This committee expresses its unqualified condemnation of the murderous assaults and riots that have recently taken place and appeals to Moslem and Hindu leaders to do their utmost to create an atmosphere of non-violence in the country."

He said that it was absolutely necessary that violence of any kind, and specially of murderous assaults on innocent, inoffensive and harmless individuals, who were absolutely unprepared, should be condemned in no uncertain terms by all, whether they were Hindus or Mussalmans. Unless they had peace in the country it would be impossible for them to do any work.

In seconding the resolution, Maulana Mahomed Ali condemned not only the murderous assaults but the organised riots and he did it both as a Congressman and as a Mussalman. They should condemn violence in no uncertain terms.

Dr. Biswanath Mukerjee remarked that some practical steps should be taken on behalf of the Congress to check such things. An empty resolution would not help them much. He maintained that there were persons in the Congress who called themselves as Hindu and Mahomedan leaders who spoke one thing in the Congress and immediately after they came out and went to temples or mosques they preached something differently.

Maulana Mahomed Ali, interrupting, said : I have every right to go out to mosques as a Mussalman.

Dr. Mukerjee : I am not going to stand against anybody's rights to speak or preach.

Maulana Akram Khan : Name the persons.

Dr. Mukerjee : Read the newspapers. I think the Maulana has no cause to take umbrage. I have not mentioned him and I do not know it has hit him.

The President standing up said that it was with a view to put an end to violence of all kind that they had assembled there and Dr. Mukerjee was right in asking that effective steps should be taken subject to their approval. What they proposed to do was to have a touring committee consisting of Hindu and Mussalman leaders to educate the public to condemn violence and to bring about an atmosphere of non-violence in the country.

Dr. Ansari's motion was carried.

### 5.—Resolution on Religious Conversions.

Mr. J. M. Das Gupta then placed before the House a resolution on conversions and reconversions adopted by the Unity Conference on the previous night for ratification. The following is the text :—

"The All-India Congress Committee resolves that every individual or group is at liberty to convert or reconvert another by argument or persuasion but no individual or group shall attempt to do so, or prevent its being done, by force, fraud or other unfair means such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under eighteen years of age should not be converted unless it be along with their parents or guardians. If any person under eighteen years of age is found stranded without his parents or guardian by persons of another faith, he should be promptly handed over to persons of his own faith. There must be no secrecy as to the person, place, time and manner about any conversion or reconversion nor should there be any demonstration of jubilation in support of any conversion.

"Whenever, any complaint is made in respect of any conversion or reconversion, that it was effected in secrecy or by force, fraud or other unfair means, or whenever any person under eighteen years of age is converted, the matter shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators who shall be appointed by the Working Committee either by name or under general regulations".

Maulana Shaikat Ali, supporting the resolution, said that he was not only a member of a communal society but also of a religious society. If anybody wanted to convert others to Mahomedanism or Hinduism, he was welcome to do so but only it should be a fair and square conversion. Therefore, in view of what was happening in the country, it was desirable to raise the age from 16 to 18.

Rising on a point of order, Mr. Jairamdas Daulatram of Sind said that it was a highly controversial subject but, as this meeting was convened for a special purpose, this resolution was out of order.

The President overruled his motion that consideration of this question which was one of the decisions arrived at by the Unity Conference the previous night, be adjourned to another date.

Mr. T. Prakasam wanted a reasonable time to be given to those members of the All-India Congress Committee who were not present. Those who had attended the A. I. C. C. did not know that this resolution was going to be taken up. He took objection on the grounds both of time and place and in his opinion the All-India Congress Committee should have only discussed the

matter without arriving at any decision or should have adopted a resolution tentatively for final ratification at another meeting later on.

In seconding him Mr. Jairamdas Daulatram said that the whole issue was that peace should be based on terms which were both fair and workable and he believed that the haste with which this draft had been placed before them was not conducive to a settlement. After all, they wanted to bring about peace between Hindus and Mussalmans and the Sikhs in the Punjab and he thought the move behind Congress in this matter ought to be that it should be their endeavour to bring these parties together and, after the parties had settled their differences, to register their decision. But the way suggested, in his opinion, would not bring about peace nor make it lasting and it could not be carried into effect in face of the numerous riots and murderous assaults made from time to time. He cautioned that they must not precipitate any decision for, by so doing, they would give a greater handle to the reactionaries. The question of music before mosques, he remarked, was part and parcel of the agreement.

The President: There is no question of agreement or pact in these things. What the Congress proposes to do is to take the initiative in the matter and educate the public.

Proceeding, Mr. Jairamdas said that any suggestion made by the Congress for the purpose of education should have been arrived at after a fuller discussion. He pointed out that there was practically no representative from Tamil Nadu.

The President: You can trust me to deal with at least Tamil Nadu.

Mr. Jairam: I understand, the President takes the responsibility for Tamil Nadu but I thought I might as well refer to it. Then there are only a few representatives from Andhra and the Punjab and I do not know who will take the responsibility on behalf of the Hindus to educate those provinces. I think the Congress would be wise enough to postpone the consideration of the matter and it should publish a resolution without committing it to anything.

Opposing Mr. Prakasam, Mr. T. C. Goswami said that when a decision had to be taken, the sooner it was taken the better and the policy of hastening slowly had landed the country in this terrible condition. He did not subscribe to the view that the Congress should register the decision of some society and he emphatically repudiated the suggestion. In his opinion it was the duty of the All-India Congress Committee to take the initiative in the matter and not to rely on communal organisations to settle their differences. He did not know if there was any Mahomedan organisation in the country which represented the opinion of Mahomedans but as far as his own community was concerned, he knew for certain that there was no such organisation which could speak in the name of the Hindu community. "I must tell Lala Lajpat Rai and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya," continued Mr. Goswami, "in public interests that there is no such thing as the Hindu Maha Sabha in Bengal except in one street of Calcutta. There are very few people in Bengal who recognise the Hindu Maha Sabha as authoritative and I think it my duty at this time of the All-India Congress Committee to say that there are many Bengalees who would not recognise the jurisdiction of the Hindu Mahasabha. I say it is the duty of the Congress to take the initiative in this matter and to educate the country. This resolution is on the face of it fair. Here is an agreement which gives absolutely free right to others to convert with the exception of

fraud and force. If the Congress wants to educate the public it must have its own opinion."

Dr. Ansari was surprised at what Mr. Prakasam had said and, in his opinion, this resolution on conversions was really nothing but a resolution passed at the Unity Conference in 1924 after Mahatma's fast and as such it had been before the public for the last three years.

Mr. Prakasam: Not at all. That Conference was supposed to have broken off.

Dr. Ansari proceeding said that they were deploring from day to day the atmosphere created in the country. Violence, feuds, enmity and riots were going on from day to day and, when the time came to settle these differences, they were told to put back. This was a mentality he could not understand. They should take definite action to check this state of affairs.

Mr. Purushottam Rai asked Mr. Goswami to withdraw his remarks against the Hindu Maha Sabha in view of the fact that he had already promised Rs. 1,000 to it.

Mr. Goswami:—By Hindu Maha Sabha I meant the Maha Sabha which is at Lahore.

The President:—That is all right. Mr. Goswami did not mean any reflection on the Calcutta Hindu Maha Sabha and knows quite well that Mr. Rai's cordial co-operation was materially responsible for the decision arrived at.

Defending his own conduct, the President said that he has tried his best to bring about an agreement between the Hindus and Mussalmans. He did not accuse anybody but murders were there and communal feelings were there and in this state of affairs they could not leave the matter to a communal party. His original view that these matters should be left to a communal party was a mistake, because naturally they exaggerated their own rights. Therefore, an impartial tribunal like the National Congress should deal with it.

As regards Pandit Malaviya, continued the President, if he wanted postponement on the ground of the unsuitability of time and place, he was prepared to do what was wanted but the Pandit's message: "I cannot persuade myself to attend the Conference," was clear and it meant "Hands Off".

As for Dr. Moonjee, Mr. Iyengar read his message and said that it spoke for itself. "When you accused me, I should explain."

Mr. Prakasam:—I have not accused you.

President:—I have done my best to promote amity and I am not without hopes. But if you leave the matter in this state of things there is no chance of Hindu-Moslem Unity. And what do you say to me? Murderous assaults are taking place and hands off! That is your proposition. And I have not the slightest doubt that you cannot either found nationalism or Swaraj on perpetual quarrels. Is the Congress going to abdicate its function in this matter? I would ask you to dispel from your mind that there has been the slightest injustice to the Hindu Mahasabha leaders. I say now with full responsibility that Mahomedans are more amenable to settlement. I know this is the view of Mahomedan friends who are here and of others who have sent many earnest telegrams. Simla has convinced me that what Simla has failed to do, the Congress will accomplish. What chance is there of a Swaraj Constitution if this matter is not settled? Let us then adopt the resolution.

Maulana Mahomed Ali thought that this was the most non-controversial resolution and that there was no use wasting time over it. •



Mr. Prakasam's motion was lost and the original motion of Dr. Das Gupta was adopted.

Following the defeat of Mr. Prakasam's motion Mr. Jairamdas Daulatram walked out of the meeting as he could not be a party to further proceedings of the meeting in regard to the Hindu-Muslim problem in view of the fact that it was decided to give no time to the representatives of the various communities in the different provinces to express their views on the resolutions adopted by the Calcutta Unity Conference. The meeting then adjourned.

## SECOND DAY—29TH OCTOBER 1927.

The All-India Congress Committee reassembled this afternoon under the Presidency of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar. There was a thin attendance.

At the outset, the President drew the attention of the House to the statement, published in some papers, that there had been a defeat of Mr. Horniman. The President assured the House that there was no defeat of any party. But if there had been any defeat, it was the defeat of his humble self. The President further stated that he did not belong to any party and that there was no party or group in the Congress.

### 6.—Resolution on Cow and Music.

Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta then moved the following resolution:—

The All-India Congress Committee, while approving of the following resolution on the cow and music questions as a fair settlement of the opposite demands and points of view, authorises members of the Congress to carry on propaganda among the Hindus and the Moslems along the lines indicated in the resolution, and calls upon the Working Committee to appoint a sub-committee for the purpose of carrying on such propaganda, and further resolves that the resolution do come up for confirmation at the meetings of the A.I.C.C. and the Congress to be held in Madras:—

"Whereas no community in India should impose or seek to impose its religious obligations or religious views upon any other community, but the free profession and practice of religion should subject to public order and morality be guaranteed to every community and person:

"Hindus are at liberty to take processions and play music before any mosque at any time for religious or social purposes but there should be no stoppage of the processions nor special demonstrations in front of mosques; nor shall the songs or music sung or played in front of a mosque be such as is calculated to cause annoyance, offence or special disturbance to the worshippers in the mosque.

"Moslems are at liberty to sacrifice cows or, subject to existing municipal laws regulating the slaughter of animals for purposes of food, to slaughter cows in any town or village in any place not being a thorough-fare nor one in the vicinity of a temple or a 'mandir' nor one exposed to the gaze of the Hindus. Cows should not be led in procession or in demonstration for sacrifice or slaughter.

"Having regard to the deeprooted sentiment of the Hindu community in the matter of cow killing, the Moslem community is earnestly appealed to so conduct cow sacrifice or slaughter, as not to cause annoyance to the Hindus of the town or village concerned."

"Whenever a complaint is made that any of the provisions of this resolution have been contravened, it shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators appointed by the Working Committee by name or under general regulations, and their decision shall be final".

Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta said that the Congress had been trying to compose the differences between the Hindus and the Mahomedans for the last two years. The Congress had been pursuing a policy of draft. It had allowed communal organisations full play not only in creating differences between the two communities, but also in allowing such organisations to make an attempt at settlement. It seemed to him that it was wrong on the part of the Congress to expect that communal organisation would view the questions from a broad and national point of view. The experience of the past two years had confirmed them in the belief that the only organisation which could deal with the questions successfully, was the Congress. They took up the questions for settlement in their own hands. They approved of these resolutions, and asked the members of the Congress to do propaganda to popularise these views. They called upon the Working Committee to appoint a small committee to popularise these views.

Mr. Sen Gupta concluded: "Let us start the work. Let us give the lead. We have got two months before the next Congress. People ought to think of these resolutions. We approve of these resolutions, and we say that after the experience of these two months' propaganda and the way these resolutions are accepted by the people, we would know in Madras how they could be modified. What I would like you to do is not to interfere with these resolutions to any great extent. If you make any number of alterations in these resolutions, you will only be giving a handle to those who are waiting and watching to wreck all attempts at a solution."

Maulana Mahomed Ali seconded the motion. He said that the reasons which actuated them in framing the resolutions, were that they wanted to get rid of all these occasions for excitement which led to mischief. When freedom was accorded to each community to do what it was required to do by its religion, without imposing any restrictions upon it, the present ill-will and hostility would go.

Continuing Maulana Mahomed Ali said that there would be a competition far different from the competition that existed at the present moment. To-day the competition was for each community to snatch what they could from the hands of the other and to show that they were dominant. The resolutions would practically challenge the Hindus and Mahomedans, and make them show greater consideration for the feelings of others. It was with a desire to institute a new form of competition, that the resolutions were being moved.

#### Mr. Prakasam's Amendment

Mr. T. Prakasam moved an amendment, the effect of which would be to postpone all consideration of the resolution.

His amendment wanted them to appoint a committee to tour the country to educate the masses, so that when the Congress met in Madras the committee might be able to report the views of the public.

Mr. Prakasam said that the reasons for his moving the amendment were that the question of music and the question of cow-slaughter had been either real causes or excuses for Hindu-Moslem riots during the last five years, commencing with the riots in Multan in the south of the Punjab in the year 1922. He reminded the House of what happened at the Simla Unity Conference and in the Hindu Sabha meeting. Regarding the question of cow-slaughter, he said that he was anxious that, whatever the committee did, it should be such as would not be condemned by the outside public as un-

reasonable and impracticable. He feared that dangers would accrue from the resolutions if adopted as tabled and appealed to Mr. Sen Gupta and Maulana Mahomed Ali not to press the resolutions.

Mr. B. P. Naidu seconded the amendment.

Mr. Nimbker while supporting the original resolution, expressed himself so very reluctant to speak on communal questions. He attributed all the existing evils to the want of a revolutionary programme of mass organisation before the country. He reminded the House of the unity that existed between the Hindus and the Moslems in the Non-co-operation days, and observed that council-entry and the Bardoli decision were responsible for all the fanaticism prevalent in the country. If the Congress was prepared to have a strong programme, then only would the resolutions help them.

Mr. Rajkumar Chakravarti, opposing the amendment, remarked that in view of the fact that the Unity Conference had spent much time and energy over the peace proposals, it would be an act of sheer discourtesy not to consider them. He pointed out that Mr. Prakasam wanted, in effect, not to approve of the resolution but to treat them as a mere scrap of paper. Mr. Sen Gupta, he said, had made it clear that the proposals would be confirmed at the Madras Congress with such modifications and additions as might be deemed to be necessary in the light of the criticisms received. He therefore did not think postponement was necessary. The proposals embodied a compromise and so long as there were self-seekers on earth no compromise would give universal satisfaction.

Mr. Girdharilal, Mr. Basanta Kumar Mazumdar and Mr. T. Viswanatham of Andhra supported the amendment.

Maulana Akram Khan supported the original resolution, and made a stirring appeal to the House to pass the resolution.

Mr. Subash Chandra Bose, supporting Mr. Sen Gupta, said that the resolution before the House was after all a man-made formula. He did not claim that it was in any way able to meet all the contingencies that might arise from time to time; but what he claimed in support of the resolution was, that it represented a sincere and honest endeavour to arrive at a common formula. The practical effect of the resolutions would be, on the one hand, to remove the obstinacies on the part of the Hindus in the matter of music before mosques, and on the other remove the obstinacy on the part of the Mahomedan in the matter of cow-slaughter. If unfortunately, their hopes were not fulfilled, it would then be time for them to put their heads together in order to adopt some other form of conciliation. He emphasised the point that the present proposals would go a long way towards removing a good deal of the misapprehension which seemed to prevail in the minds of the extreme Hindus and extreme Mahomedans. They, the Hindus of Bengal, Mr. Bose assured the House, were not going to lose their heads on account of the communal troubles. And if the Mahomedan leaders assumed a frantic attitude they would refuse to follow them. They had glorious traditions behind them, and had an important part to play in the chapter of their country's freedom. They were not going to surrender the position that they had taken at the very beginning. The speaker was an optimist and he hoped that the communal troubles were a passing phase, and that was why he would appeal to the Hindus of Bengal not to give up the strictly nationalistic position that they had taken up from the very beginning.

The amendments of Mr. Prakasam were put to vote and lost.

#### Other Amendments.

Mr. Prakasam next moved the following amendments :—

1. "That the Hindus shall be at liberty to play music in all public thoroughfares at all times, for religious, social or other purposes, subject to the local usages or customs that might have been obtaining prior to 1922, and also subject to any agreement between the parties or decrees of civil courts obtained by the two communities in regard to such rules.
2. "Neither the Hindus nor the Mahomedans shall claim or set up any right or usage for preventing any music in the houses or in the places of worship of the other community at any time.
3. "The Mussalmans shall be at liberty to slaughter cows subject to local and municipal laws and decrees or any special agreement or usages and customs prevailing in the towns and villages in the different provinces prior to 1922. In towns and villages that might hitherto come into existence the matter should be settled by a general board of Hindus and Moslems."

These amendments were also lost.

There were several minor amendments to the original resolution and the President appealed to the proposers of those amendments not to press them at this Calcutta session. He assured them that they were at liberty to bring forward those amendments at the Madras session of the A. I. C. C. meeting for consideration.

In spite of the President's appeal, several members rose to move their amendments.

Mr. B. P. Naidu asked for the insertion of the following proviso :—

"Provided it is already laid down by law or regulation, in any province or part of a province, that cows can only be slaughtered or sacrificed in a slaughter house, they shall not be slaughtered or sacrificed in any place other than the slaughter house; and in places where there is no such law, the right shall be exercised subject to local usages. Where local usage cannot be ascertained, a separate place of slaughter be assigned by a joint board of Hindus and Muslims of the locality.

The amendment was lost.

Mr. Saileshnath Bisi of Bengal moved the insertion of the words "statutory provision" for "municipal laws."

Maulana Mahomed Ali objected to the amendment, and reminded the House of what had happened in the Punjab over the question of statutory laws.

Mr. Subash Chandra Bose, in support of the amendment, pointed out that if there was any existing law regulating cow-slaughter for the purposes of food in any non-municipal area, there was nothing to be afraid of. There was no question of total prohibition, and he begged Mr. Mahomed Ali to accept the amendment.

Mr. Subash Chandra Bose maintained that the amendment of Mr. Bisi was a harmless one. But as there was vehement opposition he requested Mr. Bisi to withdraw the same.

With the permission of the House, the amendment was withdrawn.

#### Original Motion Carried.

After some discussion the original resolution with some minor amendments was put to vote and carried with two dissentients.

#### 7. — Bengal Detenus.

The following resolution moved by Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta was carried :

"This Committee strongly condemns the continued incarceration under Regulation III of 1818 and under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1925 of the Detenus of Bengal.

"And in view of the fact that several detenus have been in custody for over four years and are in an alarming state of health, this committee resolves that a sub-committee of six members, with power to co-opt, be appointed to devise means for expediting the release of the detenus and that this sub-committee do submit their report in time for the next meeting of the A. I. C. C.

"The members of the committee shall be Dr. Ansari, Mr. Prakasam, Mr. Akram Khan, Mr. S. C. Mitra Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar and the mover".

The meeting was then adjourned.

### THIRD DAY—30TH OCTOBER 1927.

The All-India Congress Committee concluded their deliberations this morning in a thin House, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad presiding.

The President (Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar) could not attend the meeting owing to the sudden breakdown of his health. The Mayor of Calcutta and some other leaders were absent.

There was some amount of discontent in the House when a resolution was disallowed which was moved by an Andhra member and which had reference to the Gauhati resolution laying down that it was mandatory on Congressmen to refuse offices within the gift of the Government and oppose and prevent the formation of ministries.

The Secretary, on behalf of the President, informed the House that the resolution was out of place in view of the resolution passed in the beginning of the proceedings postponing consideration of the question till the Madras session.

As a protest against this some Bengal members proposed an adjournment of the House sine die, which was carried.

### 8.—Indians in America.

Swami Kumaranand of Ajmere moved a resolution appreciating the services of Mr. Shailendranath Ghosh and Mr. Sudhindranath Bose, the Indian exiles in America, and expressing deep sympathy in their fight for the restoration of the citizenship rights of Indians and gratitude to Senator Copeland for bringing the Hindu Citizenship Bill in the American Senate to remove the disqualification imposed on Indians in America and to place them on the same footing with the other emigrants. He eulogised the services of the two Indian leaders in U. S. and pointed out that they had been deemed as political untouchables. If they wanted to keep the honour and prestige of the Indians in America, he urged the Congress Committee to start a fund and appoint a sub-committee to collect money for that fund. The time had come, he concluded, when they should not neglect the Indian exiles in America.

Mr. Nimbkar, while seconding the resolution, regretted that it was most deplorable that the Congress was not doing anything for the Indian exiles. He pointed out that the exiles were all patriotic people who had suffered for their country and it was the duty of the Congress to raise their fingers for them.

The resolution was carried.

### 9.—Cancellation of Passports.

Mr. Nimbkar next moved:—

"This meeting of the A. I. C. C. condemns the action of British Imperialism in refusing comrade Saklatwala a passport to visit his motherland and also the action

of the Indian Government in refusing passports to many Indians invited by the Society for the Promotion of Cultural Understanding, to attend the tenth anniversary of the Russian Revolution."

Mr. Nimbkar stated that Mr. Saklatwala wanted to visit his native land once more during the time of the Madras Congress, but the Government had cancelled the passport given to him. He also pointed out that many Congress leaders and journalists were invited to attend the Soviet anniversary, but they too were refused passports. The question of passports was a serious one and it ought to be tackled by the Congress.

The resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Viswanatham was carried.

#### 10.—The Nabha Abdication.

Mr. B. G. Horniman moved :—

"This meeting of the A. I. C. C. reaffirms the resolution passed at the Delhi special session of the Congress in 1923, strongly condemning the action of the Government of India in bringing about the enforced abdication of His Highness the Maharaja of Nabha as being unjust and unconstitutional, and in reaffirming the heart-felt sympathy of the nation with the Maharaja Sahib in the grave wrong that has befallen him, demands that justice be done to the Nabha cause by the restoration of the Maharaja to the gadi and in all other respects."

Mr. Horniman pointed out that the resolution was passed unanimously by the Subjects Committee at Gauhati, but for certain reasons the matter was referred to the Working Committee for a confidential report. He understood that the Working Committee had got no confidential report to offer them, and he thought it was time that the matter was closed, because in his opinion a very grave injustice had been done by the failure to have the resolution passed by the Gauhati Congress. The speaker had been travelling in the country, and had met a large number of Sikh leaders and he assured the House that the feeling of the Sikhs was very strong. Indeed, they felt strongly that the Congress in not passing the resolution at Gauhati, did the Sikh community an injustice and in a sense caused a slur upon their own support to the Nabha cause.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Rajkumar Chakravarti, and supported by Swami Kumaranda and was carried.

#### 11.—The Gauhati Decision.

Mr. Viswanatham of Andhra moved :—

"Whereas doubts have arisen as to the exact meaning and scope of the resolution passed by the Indian National Congress at Gauhati, the All-India Congress Committee feels bound to explain it; and is of the opinion that the said resolution was intended to mean and means, that it is mandatory on the Congressmen in the legislatures to: (1) refuse offices within the gift of the Government and withdraw support direct or indirect from those who so accept office; (2) oppose and prevent the formation of Ministries, and avail themselves of every opportunity to so oppose by all possible and legitimate means and ways; (3) throw out and utilise every opportunity to throw out Finance Bills, budgets and supplementary demands, in parts as well as in whole; (4) move or support only such resolutions as would decisively tend to strengthen the policy enunciated in the preamble of the resolution; and resolves to visit disciplinary action on those who do not work out or help to work out the said resolution, in the way explained."

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, Secretary, rose to a point of order, namely, that this resolution could not be moved. He reminded the House, in this connection, of the fact that when the President accepted the motion of Mr. Sen

Gupta the House by a majority carried the resolution. The President had ruled that all resolutions bearing upon the matter of the requisition were disposed of by the motion, which said that the question be dropped by reason of the fact that the Indian National Congress was going to decide the future policy and programme.

Mr. T. Prakasam characterised the point of order as most extraordinary. He pointed out that a special requisition was sent by a member of the Congress with regard to the instructions that were said to have been issued by the Working Committee on that matter. Mr. Sen Gupta made a change, and the resolution was dropped. How on earth, he said, could the mover be disallowed from explaining the meaning of the Gaubati resolution at least for the future conduct of the members of the Councils that would meet next week or before the December session of the Congress?

Mr. Basantakumar Mazumdar (Bengal) seconded the resolution.

The President ruled that the point of order was correct in view of the resolution of Mr. Sen Gupta having been passed.

Mr. Satyendrachandra Mitra (Bengal) at this stage proposed the adjournment of the House till the Madras session of the Congress. He was supported by Mr. Mazumdar.

Mr. Viswanatham said that after what he had heard from the Secretary on behalf of the President, he was not for pressing the resolution.

Mr. Iyengar recorded his protest against the manner in which Mr. Viswanatham had made insinuations.

Mr. Prakasam pointed out that there was no insinuation made against the President.

Mr. Nimkar regretted that the A. I. C. C., as a body, should quarrel in this way.

Mr. B. G. Horniman wanted to know whether the motion was a definite proposal for adjournment until the Madras session met, because it meant that, if the Committee decided now to adjourn, the Madras Executive Committee would not be in a position to discuss the matter in the interval.

Mr. Mitra in reply said that he was definite in the matter and moved that the meeting be adjourned *sine die*.

The motion was put to vote, and was carried.

#### Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

Mr. Horniman then proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Iyengar and said that although he was in profound disagreement with much of the policy that had been pursued in this Committee, he would express his appreciation of Mr. Iyengar's intense earnestness and enthusiasm and devotion to duty as the President. He was sorry to hear of his sudden breakdown and hoped he would soon be restored to vigour and health.

Mr. Horniman also thanked the Maulana Sahib for the trouble he had taken to preside over that day's deliberations.

The meeting then terminated.

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## The Madras Meeting:

MADRAS—29TH DECEMBER 1927.

The next meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, after the Congress Session, met at Madras on the 29th Dec. under a shadow of great grief caused by the sudden death of Hakim Ajmal Khan at Rampur due to heart failure. The President, Dr. Ansari, and other personal friends of Hakim Ajmal Khan came to the meeting with tears in their eyes and the news soon spread in the Congress camp.

On the meeting assembling, Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar with the permission of the President made a touching reference to the death of the great Muslim leader. Speaking with feeling, he said:—

It is indeed a great pain to us that after the jubilation of the Congress, we should have this morning received the sad news of the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan. I am sure many in this Committee have known him personally. There are others who have followed his career and his attitude towards all national questions. I feel his loss deeply as any one of his closest friends. Ever since I became acquainted with him at the Ahmedabad Congress, he managed to capture my heart, he managed also to capture the heart of everyone who came into contact with him. He was an ardent patriot. He presided over the Ahmedabad Congress when the power and prestige of the Congress were highest. He represented all that was good and great in Upper India. He had been practically the moving spirit of the Tibbi College of Unani and Ayurvedic medicines. His charity was unbounded. His old age and his services were available to all. We all looked on him as a great patriot and when times and tempers were severely tried, when riots and disturbances were at their highest pitch, he kept his temper cool and held the scales of justice even as between Hindus and Mahomedans. He commanded the confidence and love of not only of the Hindus in Delhi but also in the neighbouring provinces. All the Hindus of the country loved him dearly. I do not know how the sad news will affect Mahatmajī. I know he will feel it even more than we all feel it. Dr. Ansari tells me that he is only 57; and the telegram says he died of heart failure. The last act of his that preceded his death was a notable and epoch-making one. Disregarding all considerations of health in his feeble condition of body, he wanted to do the greatest possible service to Hindu-Muslim unity. I need not tell you how he had been responsible for the Amir of Afghanistan's visit to India, his outlook and his speeches. After he paid his respects to the Amir he went over to Rampur and there it appears he died of heart failure and the Chief Secretary of the Rampur State has sent a message to the President of the Congress. I am sure if yesterday's resolution on Hindu-Moslem unity had been known to him, he would have been very happy. Far more than any one else, he has contributed to it. It has been the triumph of his life; he himself has been the embodiment of Hindu-Moslem unity."

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar then placed before the Committee the following resolution drafted by Mr. C. Rajagopala Chariar:—

### 1.—The Condolence Resolution.

"The All-India Congress Committee records its most intense grief at the unexpected passing away of one of India's greatest patriots and workers in the cause of unity and a past President of the Congress Masihulmalk Hakim Ajmal



Khan Sahab and requests the President of the Congress to convey its respectful sympathies to the members of the bereaved family”.

Mr. Gidwani, in seconding the resolution, joined in the sentiments expressed by Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar. India, he said, had lost one of the greatest of her sons of whom not only the Muslim community but all other communities were proud.

Mr. Govinda Anand associated himself with the previous speakers. He said that but for Hakim Ajmal Khan during the last few years, the unity between the two great communities would not have been possible.

Mr. Satyamurti, in supporting the resolution, said that Hakim Ajmal Khan though a Muslim, always felt, spoke and acted as an Indian even when communal passions were roused to the highest pitch. There was no doubt that his death occurred after the triumph of the work for which he had devoted his life. Had he been alive he would have been the right hand man of the President of this year's Conference in carrying out the many important resolutions.

The resolution was put and carried unanimously, all members standing.

## 2. — Election of Office-bearers.

The election of nine members to the Working Committee was then proceeded with. The office-bearers were elected the day before by the Congress itself and their names were published in the report of the Congress proceedings.

The President told the members at the outset that in consultation with the leaders, he had selected the nine persons who would form the Working Committee. He hoped that these names would be acceptable to them all. If as President of the Congress for this year he had to carry on the work of the Congress, he must have a committee who would work with him best.

He then proposed the following names for the Working Committee and suggested these may be carried en bloc :—

Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, Maulana Mahomed Ali, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Sirdar Sardul Singh.

Mr. Ginwalla pointed out that the President's suggestion to accept these names en bloc was such as to prevent the members of the A. I. C. C. from proposing other names and exercising their right of choice of their own nominees.

The President replied that unless he was allowed to select his own cabinet he could not take the responsibility for and carry out the Congress work.

Mr. Sambamurti submitted that after the President's statement, they ought not to delay on this matter but accept his own cabinet.

Mr. Venkataramana Iyengar moved that the President's list be adopted.

Mr. Ginwalla suggested that the Working Committee must have in it members who represented the masses and looked after their interest.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru took exception to the insinuation of the previous speaker and regretted it.

Mr. Ginwalla next proposed the names of Dr. Satyapal, Mr. Gidwani, Mr. Prakasam, Mr. Govindanand and Mr. Nimbkar.

At this stage, Mr. Gowrisankar Misra moved as a definite proposition “that the names proposed by the President be considered as elected as members of the Working Committee”.

A few other members spoke with reference to this matter and they were followed up by Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar who drew their attention to the precedent of allowing the selection of members to the Working Committee in the hands of the President. It was right that the precedent should be followed even this year for the simple reason that the policy of the Congress should be worked out by members who agreed to work it out and who were most suitable for the purpose. He appealed to the members not to fight under the shadow of the death of the great leader Hakim Ajmal Khan but to accept the names. Let them understand before they proposed other names who they wished to eliminate from the President's list.

Having regard to the differences of opinion in the committee and to the difficulties in getting at a unanimous vote for the President's nominees, the President decided to put the names to the house one by one and to declare those elected who obtained the largest number of votes.

There was then some discussion as to the form in which the vote should be taken. The Committee decided to dispense with the ballot and agreed to indicate the vote by show of hands.

Votes were then taken. The following were declared elected in the order of the strength of votes they obtained :

Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi, Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Mr. Son Gupta, Sirard Sardul Singh, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Maulana Mahomed Ali.

The President's list was thus kept in tact.

### 3. — Permanent Secretary Question.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru next brought forward the subject of having a permanent Secretary to the A. I. C. C. to be in charge of office work. He said that at present there was an Under-Secretary but he had no authority to sign even the routine papers. It was necessary the appointment of a permanent Secretary should be created to be in charge of the A. I. C. C. office. He drew the attention of the members to the following change in the Constitution which Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar had suggested in the draft programme for the "ensuing session of the Congress".

In para 2 delete the second sentence beginning with "the general secretaries" and ending with "the Reception Committee" and substitute the following :—

"The office shall be in charge of the permanent office secretary who should carry on the routine work, while the elected secretaries shall exercise general powers of supervision in order that the policy and programme of the Congress may be carried out. The secretaries shall be responsible for the printing and publication of the report of the proceedings of the preceding session of the Congress and of any special session held in the course of the year, in co-operation with the Reception Committee".

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar who was present at the meeting, also urged the need for the creation of this post for expeditious and efficient work in the Congress Office.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar stated that the members were not fully posted with the details of this proposal and it was therefore necessary that it should be referred to the Working Committee for being considered in all its bearings.

Mr. Sambamurthi opposed the suggestion of the ex-President of the Congress for the postponement of this question and said that it was unfortunate that whenever Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar had in mind the idea to

postpone the consideration of the subject he wanted the House to refer it to the Working Committee. Such was the fate of the resolution regarding the habitual wearing of khaddar, the resolution on the boycott of British goods and so on. The subject now under discussion was known by every member of the House to be coming up at the meeting and it was surprising that this suggestion of postponement should be made by Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar : No details have been placed before us.

Mr. Sambamurti : It does not require much of detail. The question is simple.

Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru pointed out that this was not a new proposal and it had been before the Committee a number of times previously.

Mr. Joglekar moved that the subject be referred to the Working Committee for a full report of proposals.

Mr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya seconded the motion and it was carried.

#### 4.—Neill Statue Agitation.

Mr. Sambamurti next moved the following resolution :—

"This Committee is of opinion that the Neill statue on the Mount Road, Madras is a standing insult to the respect of the citizens of Madras, the Indian nation and humanity itself inasmuch as he was guilty of many barbarous and blood-thirsty acts of revenge (such as wholesale burning of villages, the hanging and shooting and burning alive of thousands of men, women and children) and that the statue should not be allowed to continue to remain within the public view.

"This Committee congratulates the Neill statue Satyagrahis upon their bold initiative and sacrifice".

Mr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya enquired if any resolution had been passed by the committee in respect of the Lawrence statue.

Mr. Raja Rao (Under-Secretary) replied in the affirmative.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The meeting then appointed a committee to consider the changes that are necessary in the Congress Constitution and the question of the re-organisation of the Congress Committee. The committee will consist of General Secretaries Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar and Mr. Sivaprakasa Gupta.

The All-India Congress Committee next passed the following resolution proposed by a member :—

#### 5.—Refusal of Passports.

"This committee condemns the action of the British Government in refusing passports to the deputation of the Sikh Gurdwara Prabhandak Committee to enable them to go to Shanghai to compose the acute differences among the members of the Sikh community there".

The meeting then adjourned sine die.

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# The Unity Conferences.

In August 1927 as an immediate result of the agitation started in connection with the "Rangila Rasul" pamphlet, Maulana Shaukat Ali wrote on behalf of the Central Khilafat Committee to Dr. Moonji, President of the Hindu Maha Sabha, requesting him to agree to the calling of a meeting when representatives of the Central Khilafat Committee and the Hindu Maha Sabha could meet and discuss the communal situation and try and discover remedial measures. Dr. Moonji promptly responded to this invitation and as a consequence a conference was summoned at Simla which nominated a committee known later on as the Simla Unity Committee.

This Unity Conference which met on the 30th August, after three hours' discussion, issued an appeal over the signatures of a large number of Hindu and Moslem leaders, including the members of the Central legislature, beseeching both the communities to support them in their efforts to arrive at a satisfactory settlement, by refraining from doing anything that would have the least likelihood of disturbing public tranquillity. They deliberated in the firm determination that they must, by sincere co-operation, make one supreme effort to settle, once for all, the differences that divided them, and find out a permanent and equitable solution of all such differences. The following is the full text of the appeal:—

## The Leaders' Appeal.

We the undersigned deplore the communal differences that have most unfortunately grown up among our people and have created so much mistrust of each other, that on the slightest provocation or misunderstanding, some of our countrymen, Hindus and Mussalmans, come to blows and trivial incidents develop into heart-rending tragedies, involving loss of innocent life and property and embittering still further the relations between the two communities. It will be the greatest folly, indeed a sin, to fail to realise the extreme gravity of the situation. Apart from the impossibility of making any political advance in such circumstances, peaceful social existence itself is threatened. Those who are interested in misrepresenting us and lowering our national character in the estimation of the rest of the world have found in the present deplorable situation an excellent opportunity to carry on their campaign of vilification and misrepresentation and thereby retard our political progress, and delay our freedom. All this has made us firmly determine that we must sit together and by sincere co-operation make one supreme effort to settle once and for all, the differences that are dividing us and find a permanent and equitable solution of all such differences and inculcate and enforce, so far as it lies in our power, individually and collectively, mutual toleration.

We are determined to do this and seek divine guidance and support in our honest endeavours to restore peace, harmony and friendly relations between the various communities and to secure for our nation its honoured place in the ranks of the civilised and progressive nations of the world. But every fellow-countryman of ours can, we believe, understand that it will not be possible for us to concentrate our energies on the important issues that have to be settled if our attention is distracted by the deplorable incidents that are occurring with such heart-rending frequency. We, therefore, appeal to our fellow-countrymen with all the earnestness and fervour that we can command, to support us in our efforts

to arrive at a satisfactory settlement by refraining from anything that has the least likelihood of disturbing public tranquility. We appeal to them in the name of our Motherland, to respect each other's life, property, honour, religion and places of worship, to avoid giving offence and to vie with one another in forbearance and forgiveness. Violence and show of violence have, so far, benefitted neither community and cowardly cold-blooded murders and murderous attacks have harmed those that have indulged in them, not less than their victims. We place on record our deepest abhorrence of such wicked and inhuman acts. Indulging in insulting any religion and in scurrilous writings wantonly vilifying the founders of religions and other great religious personages, who are held in reverence by the followers of any religion, and thus outraging the religious feelings of our fellow-countrymen are still more wicked, and we equally earnestly place on record our deepest abhorrence of such acts. It is a matter of great relief and consolation to us to think, and we are glad to be able to convey this assurance to our countrymen, that no community as such has instigated, abetted or approved of such attacks and that it is wrong to blame any community as a whole for the misdeeds of any individual or individuals belonging to it, however gross their misconduct may be. We deeply deplore and condemn all inflammatory writings and speeches, which are calculated to promote hatred or ill-will among the communities and the efforts which are being made in certain quarters to bring about the economic boycott of one community by the other. We honestly feel that such a boycott is not only impracticable, but that all such efforts are sure to prove highly prejudicial to the best interests of both communities and the country as a whole, leading to further embitterment of their mutual relations and likely to result in further breaches of the peace.

Our appeal is addressed to every son of India and to every daughter of India, but in particular, we beseech those of our countrymen who make use of the Press or the platform to exercise great self-restraint in all they write or say and permit nothing to escape them which may offer the least provocation to any of their fellow-countrymen. We know that our previous efforts in this direction have not been crowned with the success we hoped for, but we are determined to make another effort and we are determined, with divine assistance, to succeed and we firmly believe that success is within our reach, if we devote ourselves heart and soul to this great purpose and if our fellow-countrymen also assist us to the best of their power and not distract us, by a continuance of the wretched outburst that have disgraced the Indian nation. May the Almighty and All-Merciful Providence that shapes our destinies give us the guidance and support that we sorely need to-day.

This Unity Committee sat at Simla from 16th to 22nd September. No conclusions having been reached on some of the principal points involved in the cow and music questions and others pending before the Committee not having at all been touched, some members were of the view that the Committee might break up. But the Hindu members pressed that the Committee should again meet on some future convenient date. The Muslim members of the Committee were at first divided in their opinion, but at last agreed to break up the Committee and the President was requested to summon a meeting if he received a requisition within six weeks from eleven specified members.

The following is a resume of the proceedings of the Committee supplied to the press by its Secretaries Mr. Jairamdas and Abdul Matin Chowdhury :—

### Official Report of the Proceedings of the Committee

#### The Cow Question.

The main committee met on the 16th under Mr. Jinnah's chairmanship. Questions relating to cow and music were discussed. On the 18th, it appointed a sub-committee, consisting of Pandit Malaviya, Dr. Moonji, Mr. Jairamdas, Rai

Kedarnath of Delhi, Principal Diwanchand of Cawnpore, Sardar Sardul Singh, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Ansari, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Mahomed Ali and Dr. Kitchlew. The sub-committee discussed, on the 18th, the cow question. The main committee discussed the music question on the 18th and 19th, and also referred it to the sub-committee. The sub-committee sat from the 18th to 22nd and submitted, last evening (22nd.) the following report :—

“The sub-committee dealt with the cow question and the music question, and considered the various drafts submitted to it. Ultimately, the following final draft of the Hindus relating to the cow question was considered :—(1) In places having municipalities, town committees and notified areas committees, the slaughter of cows shall be confined to slaughter houses licensed for the purpose ; (2) in places other than those mentioned in the preceding clause, cows shall not be slaughtered except in places specified for the purposes outside the populated area and not exposed to public gaze ; (3) cow slaughter shall not take place in any place where it has not taken place before ; (4) in towns or villages which may hereafter come into existence, the question of slaughter of cows shall be determined by agreement between the Hindu, and Sikh and Muslim communities residing there ; (5) cow slaughter shall not take place in any city, town or village which is held in religious sanctity by the Hindus or Sikhs, except where it is established that cow slaughter has been taking place for a reasonably long time ; (6) no cow for slaughter shall be led in procession or with any demonstration and the routes shall be determined by agreement between the Hindu, Sikh and Muslim communities residing in the place ; (7) sale of beef or pork shall be registered to places licensed for the purpose ; (8) where slaughter of animals for sale of meat is permissible on other grounds no objection shall be taken to the method of slaughter whether by Jhatka Bali or Zibah.”

The Muslim members of the sub-committee did not agree to the above draft except on some points as stated below. They objected to clauses (2) and (3). With regard to (4) they objected to any reference to Sikhs, since the Sikhs have made no demands. Regarding clause (5), the Muslim members stated that they would consider it when a list of such sacred places was supplied to them. They also objected to the reference to the Sikhs, on the same ground as above. They agreed to clause (6) except for its reference to Sikhs. They disagreed with clause (7) but agreed to clause (8) provided the list referred to in (5) was supplied and agreed upon.

The final Muslim draft on the cow question was as follows :—(a) Hindus must not expect that the exercise of the right of Muslims to slaughter and sacrifice cows in any town or village can or will be stopped by the use of force, or by an act of the legislature or by a resolution of a local body or by the order of a court ; but must trust to the establishment of better relations between the two communities to create greater regard for their feelings, (b) every Muslim is entitled in a town to sacrifice and in a village to slaughter or sacrifice a cow in any building or enclosure which is not open to the gaze of the Hindu passers-by, provided that if it is already laid down by the law in any province or part of a province, that cows can only be slaughtered or sacrificed in towns in a slaughter-house, they shall not be slaughtered or sacrificed in any place other than a slaughter-house, (c) all public thoroughfares shall be open for taking cows for slaughter and sacrifice, but they shall not be taken in a procession, nor shall there be any demonstration in this connection, (d) no restriction shall be imposed on the sale of beef or pork, (e) no restriction shall be imposed on the manner of slaughter of any animal whether by Jhatka Bali or Zibah, or on the opening of shops for the sale of meat of any animal slaughtered in any of these ways.

The Muslim members also proposed two other alternative drafts. The first runs :—“No restriction shall be imposed either on the right of any community in any part of India to slaughter or sacrifice any animal, whether, a cow, goat, sheep or swine, or on the manner of its slaughter, whether Jhatka Bali or Zibah, but no cow shall be slaughtered or sacrificed except in a slaughter-house provided for the purpose. Where slaughter-houses do not exist at present, they shall be provided, and licences shall not be refused by the competent authority whenever an

application is made to it for opening a slaughter house or shop for the sale of meat of any animal slaughtered in any manner."

The second Muslim alternative was: "The Hindus should not be prevented from playing music before mosques at any time they like, nor should Muslims be prevented, from making any cow sacrifice or from cow slaughter in such manner as they like."

The first of these three proposals was not accepted by the Hindu members except the second part of clause (c) and the first part of clause (e). The other two alternative drafts were not agreed to by the Hindus.

### MUSIC BEFORE MOSQUES.

As regards the question of music, the Mus'im proposal was as follows:

"While it is the right of every community to take processions with music along the public thoroughfare, it must not do so in a manner calculated to interfere with the right of the Mussalmans to undisturbed congregational worship when such a procession is passing a mosque in which congregational worship is going on at the time." This was not accepted by the Hindus.

The Hindu proposal regarding music ran as follows:

"There shall not be any objection taken to, or any kind of restriction placed on the passing of Hindu or Sikh processions of any kind accompanied by music at any time along public thoroughfares having mosques or to the performance of 'arti,' the playing of music or the playing of 'shang' in private or public temples, buildings or places, at any time, even if such temples buildings or places are situated in front of, or in proximity to, a mosque, provided that any processional music, except religious music, shall not be played before old historic mosques such as the Jumma Masjid of Delhi, before which it has not been played for a long time."

The above proposal was not accepted by the Muslim members.

Dr. Moonji moved the following, which was supported by the Hindu members of the sub-committee:—"The sub-committee has very carefully considered and discussed the draft formulae on the cow and music questions submitted on behalf of the Hindus and Muslims. The sub-committee find that there are some points, on which agreement may be easily possible; and yet, there are some on which agreement does not seem to be likely at the present moment, and which therefore require further consideration. The sub-committee, therefore, recommends that the main committee be adjourned to some suitable day, after a month or so."

The Muslim members suggested that this should be left to the main committee which met at 3 p. m. yesterday in the committee room of the Assembly Chamber. The sub-committee's report was submitted; and, after discussion, the main committee unanimously adopted the following resolution:—"This meeting stands adjourned; but Mr. Jinnah will call a meeting of the Unity Committee within three weeks of receiving a unanimous requisition from the following gentlemen within six weeks from to-day:—Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Ansari, Maulana Mahomed Ali, Dr. Kitchlew, Pandit Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai, Dr. Moonji, Rai Kedarnath, Mr. Jairamdas and Sirdar Ujjal Singh."

Before dispersing the main committee issued the following appeal in the form of a resolution: "This committee is distressed to find that several Hindu-Muslim riots have occurred since it was constituted, leading to loss of many Hindu and Muslim lives and of property and inflicting much injury on many of our brethren. This committee earnestly appeals to all people and all men of light and leading throughout the country, to use their best endeavours to prevent such riots, to put an end to communal tension and to persuade their co-religionists not to take the law into their own hands even under provocation. It also appeals to the people to establish local unity boards for preventing disturbances, and to compose the difference and promote mutual good will."

### Muslim Members' Statement.

The following statement was issued by Mr. Shafi Daudi, Secretary, Muslim Members, Unity Conference. It was stated that it had the assent of practically all the leaders of Moslem public opinion in India :—

So long as the leaders of the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities were engaged in a discussion to arrive at a satisfactory settlement of the differences that are unfortunately disturbing the peaceful and friendly relations which should exist between the various communities which form the population of our motherland, it was not considered advisable, in the interest of the success of the negotiations that were going on, to publish any information regarding the progress of the discussion. But, now that the labours of the Conference have reached a definite stage, we owe it to the public, as much as to ourselves, to place a summary of what has been done so far, in order that the public may know the real situation, and may advise those representing it whether to adhere to the proposals they have already formulated, or to modify them with a view to arrive at an early settlement.

Through an unfortunate inadvertence, the Secretaries of the General Committee have published only the report which the Select Committee, to which the cow and music questions were referred, have made through the chairman to the General Committee, and consequently the views proposed on the cow question by the Hindus in the General Committee before the issue was referred to the Select Committee, have not been published. Their statement is therefore incomplete, and has consequently induced us to publish this fuller statement.

#### Khilafat Committee's Letter to Hindu Sabha.

The Working Committee of the Central Khilafat Committee met at Simla, on the 27th August to consider the unfortunate situation created by the growing tension between the Hindus and the Muslims, and addressed the following letter to the President, Hindu Mahasabha :—

"My dear Dr. Moonje,—After a period of most remarkable amity and goodwill between the various communities we have been experiencing, for the last five years, a most unfortunate tension between the Hindus and the Mussalmans, which has resulted in sporadic outbursts in different parts of India. The Congress in the special session held at Delhi in 1923 endeavoured to restore the amity and goodwill that had prevailed until 1922: but obviously it failed. A year later, the Unity Conference at Delhi made a still more strenuous endeavour for the same purpose, but in its ultimate results that too, alas, proved sterile. The sporadic outbursts of 1922, 1923 and 1924 have been occurring with increasing frequency in the years that followed, and, to-day, one almost expects to read in the daily newspapers of one or two such deplorable incidents somewhere every day. But the increasing frequency of such outbursts is not their worst feature. It is now clear that communal aggression is becoming organised; and, in fact, it will be an abuse of language to characterise the recent occurrences as mere outbursts of the unruly passions of some individuals only.

"The Central Khilafat Committee has consistently worked, all through this period, for unity and co-operation between the Mussalmans and the sister communities and has not infrequently courtied and actively incurred unpopularity in the Muslim community, by condemning such excesses as could be attributed to the Mussalmans, inculcating patience and self-control and by remaining almost silent with regard to the excesses that could be attributed to the Hindus. But, to-day, the state of affairs is so deplorable that the Khilafat Committee, if it seeks to serve the interests of India and the Indian nation, cannot remain silent any longer. My Working Committee considers it necessary to warn the entire nation that, if this state of affairs is allowed to continue unchanged, even for a few months longer, the country will drift into a civil war. I trust that your organisation will not fail to appreciate the gravity of such a situation; and, it earnestly invites you and the leaders of the Congress, to co-operate with it to try to put an end to all communal aggression and to stem the tide of communal distrust and hatred. My committee has directed me to request you, to fix a very



early date when the representatives of the Central Khilafat Committee could meet the representatives of the Congress, and discuss the present situation, and try to discover the methods that will prove most effective in ending the deplorable state of affairs and in paving the way for communal harmony and friendship. The Committee is also seeking the co-operation of other important political and communal organisations in the country. And, looking to the seriousness of the danger which is threatening our body politic, it would like to place the result of these discussions and deliberations before the Central Khilafat Committee, when it meets early in October, for the purpose of deciding the line of action it should adopt.

"The Khilafat Working Committee is most anxious to restore and even improve upon the excellent relations prevailing between the various communities in 1920 and 1921, and should like to emphasise that the future depends, to a very great extent, upon the response that is received to this earnest invitation from your organisation. I trust that it will be received by you in the spirit of sincere co-operation in which it is addressed to you—Shaukat Ali."

A copy of the letter was also sent to the President, Indian National Congress, on the 28th August 1927. Dr. Ansari and Mr. Shauib Qureshi, who were deputed by the Working Committee for the purpose, discussed the contents of the letter with Dr. Moonje and with other Hindu Mahasabha leaders like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai and Messrs. Kelkar, Jayakar and Aney. As a result of these discussions, the Hindu Mahasabha leaders suggested that a preliminary discussion should take place between the Hindu and Muslim leaders then present at Simla.

#### Preliminary Meeting of Leaders.

In the meantime, the Working Committee got into touch with other responsible Muslim leaders present at Simla, with a view to secure their co-operation. On the 29th August 1927, a meeting of the Hindu and Muslim leaders took place in one of the committee rooms of the Assembly Chamber. Discussion was opened by Mr. Kelkar, who suggested that we might begin where the communal question was left by the All-India Congress Committee after its acceptance of the Delhi proposal, and proposed that the question of communal representation be taken up for discussion. But Lala Lajpat Rai suggested that, although that was an important enough matter, there were others also that deserved our serious attention.

It was finally agreed upon, that a list of the points of difference between the two communities, should be submitted on behalf of each community to Mr. Jinnah, who had been elected as the Chairman of the Conference. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya proposed and it was agreed upon that Dr. Gokal Chand Narang and Mr. Shauib Qureshi should draft an appeal to the public so as to give an opportunity to the leaders of the two communities, who were about to assemble to continue their deliberations undisturbed and undistracted by the tragic occurrences such as were taking place only too frequently. On the 30th August the draft appeal was discussed and after slight additions and alterations it was agreed to and signed by the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh leaders present. A prayer was also offered for the success of this noble endeavour and it was decided that the conference should take place on the 7th September.

#### Differences in the General Conference.

The conference was accordingly opened on the 7th in the Brahma Samaj Mandir. But, when the Hindu and Muslim lists of the points of difference that tend to divide the two communities was read, it was found that the Hindu list excluded all political differences, which, no less than other differences, are in the opinion of the Mussalmans responsible for the present deplorable state of affairs and are in reality at the bottom of the inter-communal struggle that is going on to-day. This caused us very great surprise. It was impossible to reconcile this with Mr. Kelkar's own speech in which he wanted to inaugurate the conference with the political questions involved in the Delhi proposals and All-India Congress Committee resolution accepting them. Our surprise was still further increased when Dr. Gokal Chand Narang rose to propose that all political questions should

be eschewed, as if a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim disputes was possible without a settlement of the political claims of the two communities.

After considerable discussion, a sub-committee was appointed for settling this question and preparing an agenda for the conference. When it met on the 18th September, only Dr. Moonje and Dr. Gokal Chand Narang attended on behalf on the Hindu members and dictated a note against the inclusion of political questions in the agenda. Sir Mahomed Shafi and Maulana Mahomed Ali dictated a note on behalf of the Muslim members insisting on the inclusion of political and economic questions also. When Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar returned from the Assembly meeting, which had kept him busy the whole day, and learnt that the two Hindu members of the sub-committee had dictated a note on behalf of all the Hindu members, he wrote a minute of dissent, strongly disagreeing with these two Hindu members and agreeing with the unanimous opinion of the Mussalman members.

#### Sub-Committee on Cow Question.

Mr. Jinnah, Chairman, announced this disagreement to the conference, when it met in the evening. As it was feared that the conference would break up on that issue, the Hindu members began to relent, and the matter was referred back to the sub-committee. The sub-committee agreed to the inclusion of all the points of difference whether political, economic, religious or social, but recommended that the settlement should be left to a committee consisting of 15 Hindus, 15 Muslims and 5 Sikh representatives, selected respectively by the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh members of the conference, subject to ratification by the organisations representing these communities. It was also recommended that questions common to the two lists, in other words, social and religious questions, should be discussed first and that the political and economic questions excluded by the Hindus from their list and included in the list submitted by Muslim members, should be discussed later. Subsequently the number of representatives was raised to 25 Hindus and 25 Mussalmans and 8 Sikhs. These recommendations were accepted by the conference, when it met on the 9th September.

On the 10th September, an informal meeting of the members of the committee thus selected who were present at Simla, decided to begin work formally on the 16th September and go on with the meeting from day to day, till they had settled all the points at issue.

On the 16th September the Committee commenced its work in one of the committee rooms of the Assembly under the chairmanship of Mr. Jinnah, who called upon the Hindu members to formulate their demands with regard to cow-slaughter and cow-sacrifice. And in response to this, Prof. Diwanchand proposed as follows :—(a) slaughter of cows should be confined to the buildings and enclosures already specified for the purpose, and to the towns and villages in which it was taking place before the year 1922. (b) Cows for sacrifice should not be led in procession or with demonstration to places or by routes hitherto not used for that purpose, (c) the sale of beef or pork should be restricted to places specified for the purpose, (d) no objection should be raised by any community to the method of slaughter or to the opening of shops for the meat of the animals slaughtered excepting beef or pork.

On the 17th September, Maulana Mahomed Shafi Daudi proposed as follows :—“(a) The Hindus must not expect that exercise of the right of the Muslims to slaughter and sacrifice cows in any town or village, can or will be stopped by the use of force or by the resolution of a local body or by an act of legislature or by the order of a Court, but must trust to the establishment of better relations between the two communities to create greater regard for their feelings; (b) every Muslim is entitled to slaughter and sacrifice cows in any building or enclosure which is not open to the gaze of the Hindu passersby, provided it is not already laid down by law in any province or part of a province, that cows can only be slaughtered and sacrificed in slaughter houses; (c) all public thoroughfares shall be open for taking cows for slaughter and sacrifice, but they shall not be taken in procession, nor shall there be any demonstration in this connection; (d) no restriction shall be imposed on the sale of beef or pork; (e) no restriction

shall be imposed on the manner of slaughter of any animal whether by jhatka, bali or zibah or on the opening of shops for the sale of the meat of any animal slaughtered in any of the above ways."

This was discussed and in the course of the discussion, Mr. Kelkar suggested to the Mussalmans to extend their acceptance of the Act of legislature already passed, which governed the Muslim practice in a part of the Punjab, and offer to accept the same rule for the rest of India. The Act laid it down that cow slaughter should be confined to slaughter houses and enforced the practice of sacrificing cows in private buildings and enclosures in the towns and villages.

On this Mr. R. S. Kedar Nath proposed as follows:—The slaughter of cows shall be confined to the slaughter houses already established for the purpose of cow slaughter by the Government or by any local body. In a village where a slaughter house does not exist, the slaughter of cows shall be confined to buildings or enclosures which have been specified for the purpose by the Government. A slaughter-house for the slaughter of cows shall not be established in any town or villages where slaughter of cows has not taken place before. The sale of beef or pork shall be restricted to the places specified for the purpose. When the slaughter of an animal or the sale of meat is permissible on other grounds, no objection shall be taken to the method of slaughter whether by jhatka, bali or zibah.

#### Cow-Slaughter Question.

Mr. R. S. Kedar Nath, demanded the surrender of the right of the Muslims established all over India except in a part of Delhi and the Punjab, to sacrifice cows in their own houses and enclosures, which Professor Dewanchand had not demanded. This was not all. He also demanded, that a slaughter-house for the slaughter of cows shall not be established in any town or village where slaughter of cows had not taken place before. The Muslim attitude throughout this discussion, was illustrated by Dr. Kitchlew's ready response to Mr. Kelkar's suggestion: for, he proposed as follows:—No restriction shall be imposed on the right of any community, in any part of India, to slaughter or sacrifice any animal, cow, goat, sheep or swine, nor on the manner of its slaughter, whether Jhatka, Bali or Zibah; but no cow shall be slaughtered or sacrificed except in a slaughter-house provided for the purpose. Where slaughter-houses do not exist at present they shall be provided, and licences shall not be refused by the competent authority whenever an application is made to it for opening a slaughter house or a shop for the sale of the meat of any animal slaughtered in any manner.

It may be stated for the sake of absolute precision that, through inadvertence, the original proposition of Dr. Kitchlew confined the sacrifice of all animals to slaughter-houses; But, since the Hindu leaders demanded confinement of the sacrifice of cows only to slaughter houses, the original proposition was accordingly corrected. But the Hindu leaders refused to accept this proposition also and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya finally proposed as follows: (1) In places having municipalities, town committees, notified area committees or sanitary committees, the slaughter of cows shall be confined to slaughter-houses licensed for the purpose; (2) in places other than those mentioned in the preceding clause, cows shall not be slaughtered except in a place outside the populated area and not exposed to public gaze; (3) cow slaughter shall not take place in any place where it has not taken place before; (4) in towns or villages which may hereafter come into existence, the question of slaughter of cows shall be decided by a joint board of the Hindu and Muslim inhabitants of the area; (5) cow slaughter shall not take place in any city, town or village which is held in religious sanctity by Hindus and Sikhs; cows shall not be led for slaughter in procession or with a demonstration or be led to places or by roads not used for the purpose before 1922; (7) sale of beef or pork shall be restricted to places licensed for the purpose; (8) where slaughter of animal or sale of meat is permissible on other grounds, no objection shall be taken to the method of slaughter whether by Jhatka Bali or Zibah.

It was contended on behalf of the Muslims, that Hindu feelings were more likely to be hurt if a large number of cows intended for sacrifice were brought

home and subsequently led by their attendants to the slaughter house of the town and their meat brought home than if they were quietly slaughtered by individual Mussalmans in their own homes and enclosures.

But Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya said that it hurt the Hindu feelings far more to know that cows were being sacrificed inside the populated areas and in the Mohallas in which there was a mixed Hindu and Mahomehan population, than it would if they were sacrificed in the slaughter houses.

#### Matter Referred to Select Committee.

After considerable discussion, lasting for 3 days, it was decided, on the 13th September, to refer this and the Muslim resolution and also Dr. Kitchlew's proposition to a select committee composed as follows:—(1) Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya; (2) Mr. R. S. Kedernath; (3) Dr. Moonje; (4) Prof. Dewan Chand; (5) Mr. Jairamdas Daulatram (selected by the Hindus); (6) Sirdar Sardul Singh (selected by the Sikhs); (7) Hakim Ajmal Khan; (8) Dr. Ansari; (9) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad; (10) Maulana Mahomed Ali; (11) Dr. Kitchlew (selected by the Mussalmans).

This select committee discussed the resolution, but no agreement could be reached. Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar proposed that the basic principle which should guide the performance of religious ceremonies of either community must be freedom to act according to their religion and that no restrictions should be imposed by one community on the other. Accordingly, cow slaughter and cow sacrifice and the playing of music before mosques must be left to two communities, and they should be free to do what they deemed proper. Mussalmans must have freedom to slaughter and sacrifice cows as they liked, and the Hindus must have equal freedom to play music before mosques as they liked. This seemed to him to be the only logical, effective and statesmanlike solution of the knotty problem before them. He trusted to the good sense of the two communities and the establishment of better relations between them to induce them to exercise rights in a manner that would not outrage the feelings of others. The Mussalmans agreed to it, but most of the other Hindu members indignantly refused to accept this proposition and even to discuss it.

#### Music Before Mosques.

In the meantime, the question of music before the mosques was considered and the Mussalmans who had been called upon by the Chairman to formulate their demand, first proposed (through Maulana Mahomed Ali) as follows:—While it is the right of every community to take out processions with music along public thoroughfares, they must not do so in a manner calculated to interfere with the right of the Mussalmans to undisturbed congregational worship in their mosques; and the playing of music must cease when such processions are passing mosques in which congregational worship is going on at the time.

It was explained that with regard to the prayer offered before sun-rise, no conflict was likely to occur, as Hindu and Sikh processions were not taken out before sun-rise. As regards the time of other prayers, it was explained that congregational prayer did not take long to offer. In case congregational prayers had already commenced in a mosque, Hindus or Sikhs, who believed that it was wrong to stop the music accompanying their religious processions even for so short an interval, could stop their processions at a safe distance from the mosque. Where congregational prayers had not commenced, it could be delayed for a few minutes till the processions had passed, except in the case of Maghrib or sun-set prayer, which must be offered in all the mosques immediately after the sun had set and could not be delayed, and which would be generally over in a quarter of an hour or 20 minutes. Tarweeh or recitation of the Quoran during the Ramzan at nights, lasting for about an hour and a half was a special prayer and needed special treatment.

The Sikhs were agreeable to accept this proposal, but Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya thought that conflicts would still arise on the question whether congregational worship was going on or not at time when the music procession was passing the mosque.

The system now being followed by the Calcutta authorities, was then explained by Mr. Shaheed Suhrawardy, according to which "Zuhr, Asr, Maghrib" and "Isha" prayer-times were ascertained and announced beforehand by the Commissioner of Police after due consultation with the Imams of the mosques in the localities through which the musical processions had to pass. In the licenses issued, the Hindus were ordered to stop music while passing before mosques during the times specified.

This too was not agreeable to the Hindu members and they were therefore called upon to formulate their views which they did in the following terms:

"There shall not be any objection taken to any kind of restriction being placed on the passing of Hindu or Sikh processions along public thoroughfares having a mosque or mosques on either side, or to the performance of arti, the playing of music or the playing of "shang" in private or public temples, buildings or places at any time, even when such temples, buildings or places are situated in front of or in proximity to a mosque, provided that any processional music shall not be played before such old historic mosques as the Jumma Masjid of Delhi, before which it has not been played for a long time."

It will be noted that, while the fullest freedom is claimed by the Hindus for themselves in this proposition and nothing is mentioned about the right of the Mussalmans to undisturbed congregational worship in their Mosques, the provision is indeed to restrict the existing usage also, since music both mundane and religious is to be allowed to disturb congregational prayers in all Mosques except in such old historic Mosques as the Jumma Majid of Delhi.

Mr. Shaheed Suhrawardy desired that in places where music may be played before Mosques, the following conditions shall be observed: (1) Processions obviously organised as demonstrations should not be allowed, (2) new processions should be discontinued, and none be organised in future, (3) the processions must pass by Mosques without any demonstrations e. g., stopping before the Mosques or shouting or challenging or playing of music louder than in other places. If they were to do so permission to take out processions should not be given in future.

The Select Committee considered the two questions, but could not arrive at any settlement agreeable to the two communities. The Mussalmans had adopted the suggestions of the two Hindu members, Mr. Kelkar and Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar as their own, as two alternatives to their own proposal regarding the cow question, but they were rejected by the Hindu members of the Select Committee. As regards the final proposals of the Hindus on the cow question, the Mussalmans could not agree to Nos. 1 and 2, which sought to confine cow sacrifices to the existing slaughter houses and to confine new slaughter-houses to places outside the populated areas. Nor could they agree to propos. 1 No. 3, which sought to deprive the Mussalmans of any right to slaughter and sacrifice in places not used for the purpose before, including not only towns and villages, but also houses and enclosures.

Similarly, the Mussalmans could not agree to any restrictions being placed on beef-shops, as they are opened only where there is demand and nobody is likely to open a beef-shop in the Hindu quarters to annoy the Hindus, as the absence of demand is certain to doom it to a costly failure. As regards the other Hindu proposals, we stated that we were prepared to accept No. 4. It was worded as follows:—"In towns or villages which may hereafter come into existence, the question of the slaughter and sacrifice of cows shall be determined by an agreement between the Hindu and Muslim inhabitants of the place." We however, added that it must not be understood to mean that unless, and until, the Hindus agreed to cow slaughter and cow sacrifice, they could not take place.

As regards the Sikhs, about whom Sirdar Kharak Singh said that they were a separate community and neither Hindus nor Muslims, no demand was made by that community to stop or restrict cow slaughter and cow sacrifice. We said the same thing with regard to No. 6. The agreement as to routes, must be between the Hindus and the Mussalmans only, and the Sikhs must not be dragged in needlessly, and it must not be assumed that Mussalmans could not lead cows by a route unless and until the Hindus had agreed to it. As regards No. 5,

we were prepared to discuss it, if a list of Hindu sacred places was given to us, and it was agreed that this restriction was desired only for such sacred places in which it was established that neither cow-slaughter nor cow sacrifice was taking place before. We did not agree to the addition to No. 5 of the words suggested by the Hindus, "except where it is established that cow slaughter has been taking place for a long time or for a reasonably long time." We do not want to sift the burden of proof from the Hindus to the Mussalmans. The words "a reasonably long time," are too vague and in fact dangerous, as many Hindu members of the select committee considered 5 years to be a reasonably long time, and not more than one member was prepared even to make it 10 years. When a list of sacred places is given to us, we shall consider the proposal; it is agreed upon to have no cow slaughter or cow sacrifice in any sacred place.

After this, our own first proposal was read out, and the Hindus refused to agree to clause (a), which was taken from the resolution of the 1921 Unity Conference.

Even the following modified clause was not acceptable to the Hindus:—  
(b) Every Muslim is entitled in a town to sacrifice a cow in any building or enclosure which is not open to the gaze of the Hindu passers-by, provided that if it is already laid down by law in any province or part of a province, that cows can only be slaughtered or sacrificed in towns in slaughter houses, they shall not be slaughtered or sacrificed in any place other than a slaughter house.

As regards Clause (c) the first part, which declared that all public thoroughfares shall be open for taking cows for slaughter and sacrifice, was rejected by the Hindus. Only the second part, declaring that they shall not be taken in procession, nor shall there be any demonstration in this connection, was accepted.

Clause (d) which was against imposing any restrictions on the sale of beef or pork, was also rejected. As for (e) the first part, which was against imposing any restrictions on the manner of slaughtering any animal whether by jhatka bali or Zibah, was accepted; but the second part, which was against imposing any restrictions on the opening of shops for the sale of meat of any animals slaughtered in any of the ways mentioned above, was rejected. As we have stated above, the two alternatives suggested respectively by Mr. Kelkar and Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar were also rejected by the Hindu members.

It may be added that the chairman asked the Hindu members, if they would endorse the resolution with regard to the cow question which had been passed in the Unity Conference held at Delhi in 1924, but they declined to do so. Thus ended the discussion on the cow question, and it need not be emphasised by us that we explored every avenue that could lead to the stoppage of local quarrels over cow slaughter and cow sacrifice. But, obviously, most of the Hindu members, did not seek to stop these wretched quarrels, but rather sought to curtail, if not stop, cow slaughter and cow sacrifice and to deprive the Mussalmans of their right.

No agreement was reached in the select committee also with regard to music before mosques. When the chairman presented the report of the select committee to the general committee, Dr. Moonje moved the following resolution which was supported by the Hindu members of the select committee "The sub-committee has very carefully considered and discussed the draft formula on the cow and music questions, submitted on behalf of the Hindu and Muslims. The committee find that there are some points on which agreement may be easily possible. Yet there are some which require further consideration. The sub-committee therefore recommends that the main committee be adjourned to some suitable day after a month or so."

#### Hindu Leaders' Attitude Criticised

The Mussalman members had noted how the Hindu members of the conference had selected for this committee almost exclusively those of a particular school of thought, and had eliminated some very important members of the Hindu community, whose presence was likely to be very useful in arriving at a settlement. Even the President of the Congress, who had been elected a member of the General Committee by the Conference, was excluded from the Select Com-

mittee by the Hindu members of the General Committee, in favour of far less eminent persons. Moreover, it had been noted that the Hindu leaders who dominated the conference, the General Committee and the Select Committee had, for some reason, avoided private conferences with Muslim leaders, which had been arranged with them; and their absence from and late arrival at the sub-committee's meetings, did not at any rate seem to indicate an excess of zeal for an early settlement. As for the views they expressed in the meetings they did attend, we need offer no comment, since the proposals they formulated at various stages of the discussion are the best illustrations of their attitude.

#### Adjournment of Conference

In view of these facts, the Mussalman members could not be very enthusiastic with regard to Dr. Moonje's resolution, nor be very optimistic about the result of any further negotiations, without a change of attitude. But they were anxious to avoid any total break up of the Conference. It was therefore explained on their behalf, that they were greatly disappointed at the way the discussions had proceeded, and that if they were to be invited to another meeting merely to be persuaded by the Hindu members to accept the proposals which the latter had already formulated, they were not inclined to accept such an invitation. If the Hindu members offered new proposals hereafter they would gladly respond to their invitation and would consider them as carefully and with as great a will to reach an equitable and statesmanlike settlement, as they had considered the proposals already formulated. Thereupon, the following resolution was finally adopted:—"This meeting stands adjourned, but Mr. Jinnah will call a meeting of the Unity Conference within three weeks of receiving a unanimous requisition from the following gentlemen within six weeks from to-day:—Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Ansari, Maulana Mohamed Ali, Dr. Kitchlew, Pandit Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai, Dr. Moonje, Rai Kedarnath, Mr. Jairamdas and Sardar Ujjal Singh." Mr. Shaheed Suhrawardy suggested that, in the meantime, Hindus and Mussalmans should try to adjust their differences through local unity boards, and whenever trouble was apprehended, the orders of the authorities should in the first instance be obeyed pending a settlement, and that the members of neither community, should take the law into their own hands.

Before dispersing the General Committee issued the following appeal in the form of a resolution which was adopted:—"This committee is distressed to find that several Hindu-Muslim riots have occurred since it was constituted, leading to the loss of Hindu and Muslim lives and property, and inflicting much injury on many of our brethren. This committee earnestly appeals to the people and to all men of light and leading throughout the country to use their best endeavour to prevent such riots, to put an end to communal tension and to persuade their co-religionists not to take the law into their own hands even under provocation. It also appeals to the people to establish Local Unity Boards to prevent disturbances, to compose differences and to promote mutual good-will."

## The Calcutta Unity Conference.

CALCUTTA—27TH & 28TH OCTOBER 1927.

The Simla Conference having failed Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar called another Unity Conference at Calcutta which met on the 27th October and continued till the next day when the question of music before mosque and cow-slaughter were taken together and a formula to the satisfaction of all was found. The following is a full report of the proceedings of the Conference:—

On the opening day (27th) Mr. Srinivasa IYENGAR opened the proceedings with an introductory speech explaining the situation in which the Conference met. Mr. Iyengar at the outset wanted to dispel the misunder-

standing that had arisen in some quarters as to the object of the Conference. He then proceeded to detail the circumstances which led to the calling of the Conference. The All-India Congress Committee was charged by the Gauhati Congress to bring about a settlement of the Hindu-Moslem differences by the 30th March or April. In a formal meeting of the Working Committee some further resolutions were passed. Taking the practical side of the question first, he consulted his colleagues at Delhi, both Hindu and Mahamedan, about this matter. Mr. Motilal Nehru met the members of the Hindu Mahasabha at a party where certain tentative resolutions were arrived at. Mr. Jinnah and his friends met in a conference and arrived at what was called the Delhi proposals.

He tried also if similar proposals could be passed by the Hindu Sabha, but he failed. The A. I. C. C. meeting at Bombay adopted the Delhi proposals after discussing them from their own point of view and after most anxious consideration.

So far as the Unity Conference at Simla was concerned he expected that some settlement would be arrived at and he also felt that it might be left to the Hindu Mahasabha and the Moslem League, and the Congress would not step in unless they failed. Dr. Ansari also took the same view. So far as the present Conference was concerned there was no question of over-riding the Hindu Sabha or the Moslem League.

On the first day of the Conference at Simla, Moslem members said that at the Conference only political questions should be taken up, while the Hindu members said that only social and religious questions should be taken up. But afterwards a committee was formed and agenda drawn up. In that committee the Hindu Mahasabha was fully represented, so also the Moslem League, but not the Hindu Congressmen. The only question that was sought to be thrashed out was that relating to music before mosque question and cow-killing. When the Conference separated it was said that if there was no requisition for the re-assembling of the Conference within a certain time the Conference would be dissolved. In the manner in which the Conference broke there was no possibility of the Conference meeting again. After that the situation grew worse. Stabbing attempts at assassinations and other crimes at Lahore, Poona and other places became so rampant that he felt that some steps should be taken to put a stop to these things. The Congress could not abdicate its functions. Its position had already been seriously undermined by the activities of the communal organisations. He was criticising both the Hindu Sabha and the Moslem League. If Swaraj meant adjustment of communal differences, they must come to some amicable settlement. Violence produced violence. He did not know if Swaraj was coming that day or the day after, but he did know that if Hindus and Mahomedans did not compose their differences it was impossible for them to achieve their communal prosperity even.

Proceeding further he said that this Conference was not hatched in conspiracy. It did not supersede the Hindu Sabha or the Moslem League. It was only trying to do what they failed to accomplish.

He did not make that statement by way of polemics. There should not be any misunderstanding that Congressmen were trying to jockey the Hindu Mahasabha and the Moslem League out of their respective spheres of work. Those organisations have their legitimate scope e.g. education, social uplift and religious affairs. These dissensions could not be solved com-



munally but they required a national solution. It would be a bankruptcy of Indian intellect and heart if they could not arrive at some solution of these troubles.

Mr. MOHAMMAD ALI who next followed also traced the steps leading to the calling of the Conference. In the course of his speech he condemned the murders that had taken place. He said he felt very miserable about those wretched murders and he felt more so about the wretched riots. He said that too much had been made of murders by "Charash-smokers" and it was unfair to demand that men of the position of Dr. Ansari should go out and condemn them. At the Simla Conference Mahomedans selected their representatives of the Committee who were all Congressmen.

As to the jurisdiction of the Congress he wanted to emphasise what the President had said that it was the work of the Indian National Congress. If the two communities are breaking their heads and committing all sorts of crimes it was the prerogative of the Indian National Congress, as the supreme national institution, to put a stop to this.

The Moslems kept away from the Congress for sometime and now Dr. Moonje and Pandit Malaviya and others were doing so. They came to the National Congress to make it national and they would not leave it unless they are driven out of it. They met for Swaraj. They met for common social existence. It was extremely ridiculous that they were fighting for such things as cow-killing and music before mosque. While the Bengal detenus were rotting in jails it was extremely pitiable that they were engaged in such petty squabbles.

Mr. T. PRAKASAM said that the Congress had allowed the matter to drift for the last five years. It was due to the criminal negligence on the part of the Congress and Khilafat leaders that the present state of things had come to pass. The situation was very serious and they should devote to it most anxious deliberation. He requested that after the present Conference had finished its deliberations there should be joint Conference with Lala Lajpat Rai, Dr. Moonje and other leaders.

Babu Bhagawan DAS appealed to the Hindus and Mahomedans to deal with the fundamental cause of the whole trouble on their real spiritual basis both in their political and religious aspects. He said no pacts or temporary palliatives would solve the present difficulties. Solution lay in spiritualising religion and politics.

Mr. J. M. SEN-GUPTA said that on three main questions disputes between Hindus and Mahomedans arose. They should discuss those questions and arrived at some formula which should be adopted at a resolution. And the Congress leaders both Hindu and Moslem should undertake tours in the country to familiarise the masses with those formulas. The three items on which disputes arose were ;

(1) Disputes relating to conversion and re-conversion between the two communities. (2) Slaughter of cows. (3) Music before mosque.

These questions were not new. The Delhi Unity Conference resolution about this matter might form the drafts for the resolution of this Conference. Lastly the speaker pointed out that it had been said that the matter should be left to communal organisations and Congress should have nothing to do with it. He strongly controverted such view. If there was anybody competent to tackle the question, it was the Indian National Congress. They

had waited too long and should not shirk responsibility anymore. It was unreasonable to expect that any communal organisation could be able to settle the trouble.

Acharyya P. C. ROY said that he came to the Conference with some misapprehension and was agreeably surprised to see such a representative attendance on the part of Mahomedans. He appealed to all to hold out the olive-branch and look to other countries in the world. While Japan, China, Afghanistan, Persia and Turkey were enjoying independence, 300 million Indians owing to differences among themselves were slaves in their own country. It should not be thought, said the speaker, that Moslem intolerance and fanaticism were responsible for the present situation. There was fanaticism on both the sides.

The President then took up the first question and explained the position.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar then read the resolution as re-drafted in consequence of an informal conference earlier in the day among a few leaders. The resolution, which was accepted after a long discussion, is as follows :—

#### Resolution on Conversion and Re-conversion.

"That every individual or group is at liberty to convert or re-convert another by argument or persuasion but must not attempt to do so or prevent its being done by force, fraud or other unfair means ; such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under 18 years of age should not be converted unless it be along with their parents or guardians. If any person under 18 years of age are found stranded without his parents or guardians by persons of another faith, he should be promptly handed over to persons of his own faith. There must be no secrecy as to the person, place and manner about any conversion or reconversion :

"Nor there should be any demonstration or jubilation in support of any conversion or re-conversion :

"Whenever any complaint is made in respect of any conversion or re-conversion that it was effected by force or unfair means or whenever any person under 18 years of age is converted the matter shall be enquired into and discussed by arbitrators who shall be appointed by the Working Committee either by name or under general regulations".

Then the President suggested that the question of cow-killing and music before mosques should be taken together. They could decide the questions on this basis, (i) of freedom (ii) of restriction and (iii) of custom. He then called upon Dr. Ansari to explain the situation as it stood at the present moment.

Dr. M. A. ANSARI placed before the Conference both the Hindu and Muslim view-points with regard to cow-question and that relating to music before mosques. He dealt with the several points at dispute both at the Simla Conference and subsequently.

The restrictions put on Hindu processions accompanied with music make the Hindus feel that they must exercise their right and they go on exercising their right not only in the proper manner but sometimes they do it in such a way as to excite passions of the other community. Similarly as regards sacrifice of cows its restrictions by regulations made by Municipalities and local bodies are resented by the Mussalmans.

During the days of Non-co-operation there was absolutely no restriction on sacrifice of cows by our Hindu brethren. The whole thing was left to the Muslims. At that time in Delhi we succeeded in our endeavours to reduce cow-sacrifice from 700 to 3 or 4. This was not done in one year but in 3 or 4 subsequent years. But directly the feelings between the Hindus and Mus-

musalmans were strained and regulations were made in Municipalities and local bodies to restrict the sacrifice of cows when the Mussalmans at once started it with more vigour and the number in Delhi during the last 2 or 3 years has gone to four or five hundred. We who have been trying our best to restrict the slaughter of cows do not meet with any success simply because the Mussalmans say: "If the Hindus are trying to restrict it by means of Municipal legislation and executive order we are not going to restrict the slaughter and sacrifice of cows."

The position of both the communities as it was when the Simla Unity Conference finished its labour is this:—

Mussalmans say that slaughter of cows and sacrifice of cows should take place in slaughter houses in towns, and in villages slaughter should take place in slaughter houses and the sacrifice should take place in those localities or houses which may be fixed or which are not open to the public. But in places where there are no slaughter houses they should be provided for the purpose.

Hindus want that slaughter or sacrifice of cows should take place only in slaughter houses and these slaughter houses should be outside the inhabited areas and further there should be no sacrifice in any place where sacrifice did never take place before. Further there should be no sacrifice or slaughter of cows in sacred places of the Hindus and Sikhs. In new places, towns and other areas slaughter or sacrifice should be decided by the Hindu, Sikh and Muslim inhabitants of those places, towns and areas.

As regards sale of beef pork and other kinds of meat so far as the Muslims are concerned they do not want restrictions but the Hindus want them.

#### Cow Sacrifice.

One point which I want to mention in this connection is this: that in many parts of India, in Bengal, sacrifice of cows takes place in private houses. In a large part of India sacrifice of cows takes place in private houses during the Idd days *i.e.*, for 3 days only. It was suggested by the Muslims that the slaughter or sacrifice of cows, if it takes place in private houses which are not exposed to the public gaze, will prevent friction between the two two communities. In that case cows will not have to be taken to the slaughter house and brought back again to the house of the owner. Hindus objected to it. They said that their feeling is more hurt by the knowledge that cows are being sacrificed in localities somewhere near their dwellings.

Slaughter and sacrifice of cows should take place in slaughter houses which should be provided for the purpose throughout India. But where none exists no objection should be taken. Dr. Kitchlew accepted this formula with one proviso—that there should be no restriction as regards new places. There was one restriction put by the Hindus with regard to new places.

His proposition was that there should be slaughter and sacrifice in towns and in villages where there are slaughter houses. But where there is no slaughter houses they should be done or performed in houses or enclosures which are not open to the Hindu passers-by. And there should be no restriction as regards opening of slaughter houses in new places either temporarily or permanently. As regards the sale of various kinds of meat there should be no restriction.

Hindus wanted restriction. They demanded that no new slaughter house should be opened in places where there are none. Slaughter and

sacrifice should on no account be allowed there. Similarly in places of sanctity of Hindus and Sikhs there should be no slaughter and sacrifice.

Now the position comes to this. On the one hand there was no insistence on restriction and on the other there was the insistence in the recognition of rights and restrictions as regards slaughter and sacrifice of cows. Hindus want to assert their rights regarding music before mosque and the Mussalmans want to exercise their right relating to slaughter or sacrifice of cows. They are willing to do it in such a way as not to hurt the feelings of the other community, and for that purpose they have in their resolutions placed various restrictions and in the alternative resolution they have gone so far as to give up their right of sacrificing cows in private houses and in those places where they have not got that right.

#### Music Question.

As regards music the Hindu position in this: They want to have perfect freedom to carry processions along public thoroughfares accompanied with music. But they are willing to stop only non-religious musical processions in front of certain historic mosques.

Muslims on the other hand demand that at the time of their congregational prayer hours—four times a day—musical procession (religious and non-religious) should be stopped at some distance of the mosque and as soon as the prayer is over they can pass the mosque with music.

I have placed before you the situation as it stands to-day and it is for you to find out a formula acceptable to all.

#### SECOND DAY—28TH OCTOBER 1927.

The Conference re-assembled next day (the 28th) at 8-30 a.m. Mr. A. K. Azad attended the Conference. At the outset Dr. Ansari moved:—

"This Conference expresses its unqualified condemnation of the murderous assaults that have recently taken place and appeals to the Moslem and Hindu leaders to do their utmost to create an atmosphere of non-violence in the country."

In moving it Dr. Ansari said that an atmosphere of non-violence should prevail in the country before they could do anything further.

The resolution was carried unanimously. The President after reading the resolutions of which notices he got, put forth before the Conference the draft of the resolution which he had arrived at in consultation with some other leaders. The resolution was to the following effect:—

#### Resolution on Cow & Music Question.

Whereas no community in India should impose or seek to impose its religious obligations or religious views upon any other community, but the free procession and practice of religion should, subject to public order and morality, be guaranteed to every community and person.

Hindus are at liberty to take processions and play music before mosques at any time for religious or social purposes; but there should be no procession nor special demonstration in front of mosques nor shall the songs or music played in front of such mosques be such as are calculated to cause annoyance, special disturbance or offence to the worshippers in the mosques.

Moslems shall be at liberty to sacrifice or slaughter cows in exercise of their rights in any town or village in any place not being a thoroughfare nor one in the vicinity of a temple or a mandir nor one exposed to the gaze of the Hindus.

Cows should not be led in procession nor in demonstration for sacrifice or slaughter. Having regard to the deep-rooted sentiment of the Hindu community in the matter of cow-killing, the Muslim community is earnestly appealed to so conduct the cow sacrifice as not to cause annoyance to the Hindus in the town or village concerned.

This Conference expresses its unqualified condemnation of the murderous assaults that have recently taken place and appeals to Moslem and Hindu leaders to do their utmost to create an atmosphere of non-violence in the country.

#### An Amendment.

Mr. Raj Kumar Chakrabarty moved an amendment which had the support of Maulvi Mujibar Rahaman, Maulvi Akram Khan, Babu Nripendra Chandra Banerjee and Babu Upendra Chandra Banerjee. It was to the following effect.

Subject to any local variations that the Congress might devise for any province, resolved that the Hindus should have the freedom to lead processions with music along all public thoroughfares at any time and the Mussalmans also have freedom to slaughter cows in their mosques and private houses.

Maulvi Akram Khan in supporting the amendment asked for freedom for both communities. Babu Purusottam Rai said the resolution should be made frankly, without any hidden meaning and in such a way as not to admit of different and conflicting interpretations.

The PRESIDENT in explaining the draft of the resolution which he put before the meeting dwelt at length on the situation. He said that too many restrictions or making room for too many local variations would only lead to endless discussions. They should attack the question as practical men. Too much idealism should also be guarded against. He knew that conditions varied in different places. In the present state of things instance on custom or existing rights was also futile. To do so would be to abdicate their functions. They all knew that in times of troubles contending parties gave different and conflicting versions of custom or existing rights. They had got to settle their own affairs. The Government would not do anything. Either they were unwilling or incompetent to do anything in the matter.

Having regard to the feelings of the Hindus certain restrictions as to cow-killing had to be made. Personally it did not hurt him. But it did hurt the majority of the Hindus. And their solution of the problem must be acceptable to the great bulk of the Hindu community. Otherwise it would be futile. The speaker warned the meeting against too many restrictions. The fewer the restrictions, the more the chances of success.

As for the music before mosque question, Mahomedan friends had agreed that there should not be any stoppage of music in front of mosques, only it should not be of such a character as to cause annoyance and irritation. Their duty was now clear. If they were to act on this experiment by propaganda and organisation they would have to educate the masses about the solution they had arrived at. The adoption of this resolution was likely to lead to some difficulties in some places but having regard to the relief it would give in the majority of places it should be accepted. For instance this was likely to cause troubles in Madras, where there was the custom of stopping music before mosque but he was astonished to find that Moslem leaders of that place come to him and assure him that they were agreeable to any solution he might devise.

Continuing the speaker said that difficulties could not be solved by passing resolution but they must arrive at some formula which would be acceptable to both Hindu and Moslem workers.

If they succeeded in reaching a solution it would be a great impetus to the Swaraj movement and would lead to cordiality of communal relation, and would deprive their English friends of their excuses for remaining in the country. The present time was very opportune, said the speaker. Mahomedans were now different in their spirit. They were anxious for settlement. The idea that Mahomedans were not anxious for settlement was a mistaken idea. The difference between Congress and non-Congress Mahomedans about this matter was fast disappearing.

Proceeding further the speaker said that they must go through a middle course and not insist on existing customs and rights. They had to rescue the people from the pool of distrust, ill-will and animosities in which they had fallen, by sacrifice and conversion.

These quarrels, the speaker went on, profitted no body. As a result of this more cows had been sacrificed and existing rights had been curtailed by Magisterial orders. If the Hindus and Mahomedans wanted unity there must be some adjustment. There was no question of surrender. It was a question of balancing.

#### Other Amendments.

Mr. T. PRAKASAM said that the proposals they should arrive at should be acceptable not only to the Mahomedans but also to the Hindus. He was anxious that what they should arrive at should be reasonable, just and acceptable not to unreasonable people but to reasonable people and which might ultimately form the basis of legislation to be passed by the Assembly.

Speaking for his province the adoption of the resolution of Mr. Iyengar would lead to serious trouble and complication. He moved the following amendments :—

(1) That Mussalmans shall be at liberty to slaughter cows subject to the Local and Municipal Laws and decrees or any special agreements and also subject to any usages or customs that had been prevailing in different provinces prior to 1922.

In towns and villages that might hereafter come into existence, the matter shall be settled by a joint board of Hindus and Mussalmans.

(2) (a) That Hindus shall be at liberty to play music in all public thoroughfares subject to any local usages or customs that may have been obtaining prior to 1922 and also subject to any decrees or agreements between the two communities in regard to playing of music in front of specified mosques.

(b) Neither the Hindus nor Mussalmans shall claim any right or usage to insist on preventing any music in the houses or places of worship of the other community at any time. Neither of them shall be at liberty to set up any such usage or custom.

The cow question was not a live one on this part of the country but the music question had led to such troubles as there had not been in any other place. He cited for instance a case where a party got by decree a right to play music. But even after the decree that right was objected to and the Magistrate had to intervene, and he prohibited by order to play music even in their own private houses. At Nellore a decree of the District Judge was executed according to his order with the aid of the military and police. But afterwards Nellore was under Section 144 and the Magistrate prohibited music. That happened in March 1927. The Vakil who laboured in this cause, was attacked with knife and narrowly escaped getting killed. His assistant was beaten, his car burnt. All that happened with regard to a decree that had been executed with the aid of the military and police only a few months ago. Law, order and decrees were unavailing for these people. How to give relief to such cases, asked the speaker.

Mr. M. Shafi Daudi.—That was all the more reason formulating such a resolution.

Mr. T. Prakasam.—You must make provision to meet such cases and remove the causes that have led to such a situation. The reason for all this is due to the fact that we all abdicated our position.

Mr. Saukat Ali.—Yes, we did it and we have come back again to fight for Swaraj.

Mr. S. IYENGAR, following, said it would be distinctly understood that they were discussing the proposals on the basis of Mahomedan co-operation. If the Mahomedans and Hindus act up to this the whole thing would be a success. Otherwise it would fail as similar attempts on their part had failed. They all knew the resolutions would be attacked on both sides. Mere passing of pious resolutions would not do. The price which the Hindus had to pay for that harmony was no ignominious surrender of their rights. Nor had the Mahomedan friends come back to Congress to drive an unfair bargain. It was their hunger for Swaraj which brought them back. The President then appealed to all to bury the dead past, the memory of which was bitter.

Kumar Gangananda Singh moved an amendment in terms of the Hindu proposals at the Simla Unity Conference.

#### Dr. Ansaris Support.

Dr. ANSARI supporting the resolution said that it was clear that there was a consensus of opinion on the basis of freedom. It was after due consideration to the views prevalent among those who were present there that they had come to that resolution. The basis of the resolution was freedom for music before mosque and freedom for cow sacrifice, with only such reservations that should not be difficult for Hindu and Moslem leaders, who were really anxious for unity to accept. Criticising the resolution of Kumar Gangananda Singh, the speaker said that the principles of the two resolutions were entirely different. One was liberty of right with voluntary restrictions and the other was restriction of rights.

Mr. Shafi Daudi and Mr. P. K. Chakrabarty and Babu Gopabandhu Das further supported the resolution of Mr. Iyenger.

Mr. Raj Kumar Chakrabarty withdrew his motion. The motion of Mr. T. Prakasam and Kumar Gangananda Singh were lost.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyenger's resolution was carried with only Mr. Prakasam and Kumar G. Singh dissenting.

Mr. Lalit Mohan Das then moved the following resolution which was carried.

"That this Conference requests the All-India Congress Committee to appoint a Committee of not less than five persons with power to co-opt for each province for making tour in the country for propaganda work in connection with the question of Hindu-Moslem unity.

That the Committee will try to impress upon the people the vital urgency of the problem and to urge them to act according to the resolutions of the Unity Conference.

Rev. Andrews said that communal squabble in India was spreading to Indians overseas.

After Mr. P. K. Chakrabarty and Mr. Shyamsundar Chakrabarty had thanked the President the Conference came to a close.

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# The Statutory Commission on Reforms.

His Excellency the Viceroy in a statement announced the appointment of the Statutory Commission on Reforms on the 8th November, 1927. The Commission would be presided over by the celebrated constitutional lawyer Sir John Simon and assisted by 6 other members of the Parliament. His Excellency explained in detail the object of the Commission and stated that with a view to elicit the Indian opinion on the subject the British Parliament intended to invite the central legislature to appoint a Joint Select Committee "which would draw up its views and proposals and lay them before the Commission." It was further intended to adopt a similar procedure in the case of the provincial legislatures.

His Excellency pointed out that after the publication of the report and its examination on the part of the British and Indian Governments, the Commission would present the proposals to Parliament which would afterwards refer them to a Joint Parliamentary Committee.

On the 15th of November, the House of Lords passed the 2nd reading of the Statutory Commission Bill and on the 24th of November Lord Birkenhead in moving the resolution on the Commission expressed his opinion to the effect that he regarded the Commission as an exceptionally intelligent jury going to India with no preconceived prejudices. His Lordship wanted to emphasize the fact that the Committee of the Indian legislature had been invited in a spirit of great sincerity to co-operate as colleagues with the Commission and explained that the difficulty of finding out truly representative Indians stood in the way of including them on the Commission.

On the 24th November, the resolution was moved in the Commons by Earl Winterton, who incidentally informed Col. Wedgwood that the cost of the Commission would be borne by the Indian revenues but His Majesty's Government would contribute £20,000 towards it.

It should be noted that while so much was going on in the Government circles both in England and in India to make the Commission a success an important section of the Labour Party began to express views on the Commission which were not exactly complimentary. Some of the Labour members pointed out that some extension and amendment were necessary to remove the doubts and defects appertaining to the Commission. Miss Wilkinson, Labour M. P., considered the Commission as an outrage on the main principles for which the War was said to have been fought. Mr. Manton, Labour M. P., declared that the Labour Party should not be partners to this humiliation to India. He was decidedly of opinion that in any honourable settlement of the Indian constitution, the chosen representatives of India should have equal status with the representatives of Great Britain. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Mr. George Lansbury informed Lord Birkenhead that unless the Government modified in a manner acceptable to Indian opinion, they would be compelled to request the Labour Members of the Commission to withdraw. Moreover, they were strongly of opinion that the Committee of the Central legislature should have the same status and authority as the Commission.

Pandit Motilal Nehru, who was then staying in England, wrote to Mr.



Lansbury under instructions from the President and Secretary of the Indian National Congress asking him to consider the advisability of withdrawing labour members from the Commission and desisting from all efforts at a compromise. He stated that India expected the firm support of the Labour Party and no proposal short of some suitable form of full responsible Government would satisfy the Congress. He was convinced that the action of the Government was merely strengthening the hands of those who were working for complete independence and the Government was unwittingly playing into their hands.

On the 19th November, a meeting of the Independent Labour Party was held strongly protesting against the exclusion of the Indians from the Commission and passed a resolution to the effect that the Labour Party should ask the Labour Members of the Commission to withdraw unless Indian representatives were placed on a footing of full equality with the British representatives.

It might be recalled that at the Labour Party Conference at Blackpool which took place early in October a resolution was passed declaring for the early appointment of the Commission, but at the same time stipulating that any Commission appointed must be one which would command the confidence of the Indian people. The Commission failed to meet the latter condition, since by no stretch of language could it be said to command the confidence of the Indian people. As a consequence there was a strong feeling amongst the rank and file of the Parliamentary Labour Party that, failing an agreement on the part of the Government to appoint Indian representatives on the Commission, the two Labour nominees should be withdrawn.

Subsequently negotiations were conducted by a special sub-committee of the Party with Lord Birkenhead regarding an alternative proposal which Labour suggested that the Government should adopt. It was that the Joint Committee of the Indian Legislature should be given an equality of status, with the British Commission, and that this Indian Committee should collect evidence, draft proposals, and present these direct to the Imperial Parliament in the same way that the British Commission will present its report. What further transpired in the negotiations was not made public but the result of the negotiations was reported to the Parliamentary Labour Party which decided in their meeting held on the 24th November not to withdraw their members from the Commission. Not only this, during the Second Reading of the Statutory Commission Bill in the House of Lords, Lord Olivier gave his full support to it.

In India the announcement of the Simon Commission raised a veritable political storm. His Excellency the Viceroy's eloquent appeal "if differ they must, they should differ as friends and not stand aside" fell in deaf ears. Moderates, Non-co-operators, Home Rulers all joined hands in denouncing the Commission. The erstwhile supporters of the Montagu Reforms and the Government of India Act, 1919 changed their ground and were sufficiently loud in expressing their disapprobation.

The exclusion of the Indians from the Commission was regarded as a direct insult to the intelligence of India and once more with grief and shame she realised that "sufferance was the badge of her tribe."

There was hardly any party in India which could be found to be so poor as to do honour to the Commission. With the exception of the

European Association, the Anglo-Indian Press and a small section of the Mahomedans headed by Sir M. Shafi in the Punjab, the whole of India stood as one man against the personnel and the proposed methods of the Commission.

Meetings were held all throughout India: in all the provinces and in all the big towns recording their emphatic protest against the Commission. And in fact all shades of opinion merged in a common unanimity in condemning the Commission. Moderates and Extremists, Swarajists and No-changers, Congressmen and Loyalists all stood on the same platform. There was hardly any room for difference of opinion. People of all shades of opinion were unambiguous in their intentions. The deliberate exclusion of Indians from the Commission was an arrogant insult to an entire nation and, as such, war must be launched against it as a matter of principle. Interviews, letters and reports of protest meetings advocating complete boycott of the Commission were pouring in ceaselessly. Prominent leaders like Sir T. B. Sapru, Sir C. Setalvad, Dr. Besant, Sir A. Rahim on the one hand and the Congress President and the Swarajists on the other openly advised their countrymen to abstain from helping the Commission in any way. Boycott was freely regarded as the only effective weapon against an unwarrantable insult hurled at the heads of a people who piously hoped for far better things till at last hope deferred made their hearts sick. From the Punjab to Burma men of different calling belonging to various political parties holding divergent views and interests, all united to lodge a common protest against the Commission. The "bona-fides" of the Conservative Party in instituting the Commission was strongly suspected and the leaders of the different parties took no pains to conceal that the Conservatives in Parliament were adopting rushing tactics in Indian affairs lest they might lose their chance in the next General Election. The British Parliament stood condemned before the eyes of patient and suffering India and her deputation for justice was considerably lowered in the estimation of the Indians at large. The Commission was merely regarded as one more glaring instance of the insincerity of Great Britain in her policy towards India.

## The Viceroy's Announcement.

H. E. the Viceroy made the following announcement in New Delhi on the 8th November:—

Eight years ago the British Parliament enacted a Statute which regulated the conditions under which India might learn, by actual experience, whether or not the western system of representative government was the most appropriate means through which she might attain responsible self-government within the Empire. That Statute never professed to incorporate irrevocable decisions and recognised that the work must of necessity be reviewed in the light of fuller knowledge with the lapse of years. Parliament accordingly enacted that at the end of ten years at the latest, a Statutory Commission should be appointed to examine and report upon the progress made.

### The Delay in Appointing Commission.

Considerable pressure has, during recent years been exercised to secure anticipation of the Statute, but His Majesty's Government has hitherto felt that circumstances in India were not such as to justify, in the interests of India itself, the advancement of the date at which the future development of the Con-

stitution would be considered. So long as the unwise counsels of political non-co-operation prevailed, it was evident that the conditions requisite for the calm appraisal of a complicated constitutional problem were lacking and that an earlier enquiry would have been likely only to crystallise in opposition two points of view between which it must be the aim and the duty of statesmanship to effect reconciliation. But there have been signs latterly that while those who have been foremost in advancing the claims of India to full self-government have in no way abandoned the principles they have felt it their duty to assert, yet there is in many quarters a greater disposition to deal with the actual facts of the situation and to appreciate what I believe to be most indubitably, true, namely, that the differences which exist on these matters are differences of method or peace and not differences of principle or disagreements as to the goal which we all alike desire to reach.

It is also certain that a review, if it is to be thorough and deal adequately with the issues that will claim attention, it will have much ground to cover and both for this stage and for those that will necessarily follow, it is important to ensure a sufficient allowance of time without unduly postponing the date by which final action could be undertaken.

#### Communal Tension.

Their is another element in the present position which is immediately relevant to the question of whom the work of the Commission should begin. We are all aware of the great, unhappily great, part played in the life of India recently by communal tension and antagonism and of the obstacle thus imposed to Indian political development. It might be argued that, in such circumstances, it was desirable to delay the institution of the Commission as long as possible in the hope that this trouble might, in the meantime, abate. On the other hand, it seems not impossible that the uncertainty of what constitutional changes might be imminent may have served to sharpen this antagonism and that each side may have been consciously or unconsciously actuated by the desire to strengthen as they supposed, their relative position in anticipation of the Statutory Commission. Whenever such activities may first begin, the result is to create a vicious circle in which all communities are likely to feel themselves constrained to extend their measures of self-defence.

The fact that these fierce antagonisms are irreconcilable with the whole idea of Indian Nationalism has not been powerful enough to exercise its influence over great numbers of people in all classes and I suspect that the communal issue is so closely interwoven in the political that suspense and uncertainty in regard to the political react rapidly and unfavourably upon the communal situation. Fear is frequently the parent of bad temper and when men are afraid, as they are to-day, of the effect unknown political changes may have, they are abnormally ready to seek relief from, and an outlet for, their fears in violent and hasty action. In so far as these troubles are the product of suspense, one may hope for some relief through action taken to limit the period of uncertainty.

#### The Commission and its Task.

Having regard to such considerations as these, His Majesty's Government has decided to invite Parliament to advance the date of the enquiry and to assent forthwith to the establishment of the Commission. Subject to the obtaining of this necessary authority, His Majesty's Government hopes that the Commission will proceed to India as early as possible in the new year for a short visit, returning to India in October for the performance of their main task.

The task of the Commission will be no easy one. In the governing words of the Statute which will constitute its terms of reference, it will be charged with "inquiring into the working of the system of government, the growth of education and the development of representative institutions in British India and matters connected therewith and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible government or to extend, modify or restrict the degree of Responsible Government then existing, therein including the question whether the establishment of second chambers of the local legislatures is or is not desirable".

His Majesty's Government have naturally given careful thought to the most

appropriate agency for the conduct of an enquiry so comprehensive and unrestricted. The question of what should be the composition of the Commission is one to which the answer must inevitably be greatly influenced by the nature of the task which Parliament has to perform in the light of its advice in order that the decision at which His Majesty's Government have arrived may be fully understood. It is necessary to state in a few words what they conceive that task to be. If it were simply the drawing up of a constitution which Parliament—which must, in any circumstances be the final arbiter—would impose on India from without, the problem would be comparatively simple, but that is not the case. His Majesty's Government conceive that the preamble to the Act of 1919 recognised in effect that with the development of Indian political thought, during the last generation, legitimate aspirations towards responsible government had been formed of which account must be taken. His Majesty's present Government desire no less to take account of these aspirations and their hope is to lay before Parliament, after the investigation into the facts prescribed by the Act, the conclusions which shall, so far as is practicable, have been reached by agreement with all the parties concerned. It is with this object steadily in view that His Majesty's Government have considered both the composition of the Commission and the procedure to be followed in dealing with its report.

#### Composition of the Commission.

It would be generally agreed that what is required is a Commission which would be unbiassed and competent to present an accurate picture of facts to Parliament, but it must be found willing to take whatever action a study of these facts may indicate to be appropriate.

To fulfil the first requirement, it would follow that the Commission should be such as may approach its task with sympathy and a real desire to assist India to the utmost of its power, but with minds free from preconceived conclusions on either side. It is however open to doubt whether a Commission constituted so as to include a substantial proportion of Indian members, and, as rightly would, British official members also, would satisfy the first condition of reaching conclusions unaffected by any process of "a priori" reasoning. On the one hand, it might be felt that the desire, natural and legitimate, of the Indian members to see India a self-governing nation could hardly fail to colour their judgment of her present capacity to sustain the role. On the other hand, there are those who might hold that British official members would be less than human if their judgment were not in some degree affected by long and close contact with the questions to which they would now be invited to apply impartial minds.

But even after such a Commission had written its report, Parliament would inevitably approach the consideration of it with some element of mental reservation due to an instinctive feeling that the advice in more than one case represented views to which the holder was previously committed. It would move uncertainly among conclusions the exact value of which, owing to unfamiliarity with the minds of their framers, it would feel unable to appraise.

We should, however, be making a great mistake if we supposed that these matters were purely constitutional or could be treated merely as the subject of judicial investigation. Indian opinion has a clear title to ask that in the elaboration of a new instrument of Government, their solution of the problem or their judgment on other solutions which may be proposed should be made an integral factor in the examination of the question and be given due weight. In the ultimate decision, it is therefore essential to find means by which Indians may be made parties of the deliberations so nearly affecting the future of their country.

Balancing these various considerations and endeavouring to give due weight to each, His Majesty's Government have decided upon the following procedure. They propose to recommend to His Majesty that the Statutory Commission should be composed as follows.—

Chairman.

The Right Hon'ble Sir John Simson.

## Members.

The Viscount Burnham. Lord Strathcona. The Hon'ble E. C. Cadogan. The Right Hon'ble Stephen Walsh. Colonel the Right Hon'ble George Lane-Fox. Major C. R. Attlee.

## Legislatures to be Consulted.

His Majesty's Government cannot of course dictate to the Commission what procedure it shall follow, but they are of opinion that its task in taking evidence would be greatly facilitated if it were to invite the Central Legislature to appoint a Joint Select Committee chosen from its elected and nominated unofficial members which would draw up its view and proposals in writing and lay them before the Commission for examination in such manner as the latter may decide. This Committee might remain in being for any consultation which the Commission might desire at subsequent stages of the enquiry. It should be clearly understood that the purpose of the suggestion is not to limit the discretion of the Commission in hearing other witnesses. His Majesty's Government suggest that a similar procedure should be adopted with the provincial legislatures.

The vast area to be covered may make it desirable that the task of taking evidence on the more purely administrative questions involved should be undertaken by some other authority which would be in the closest touch with the Commission. His Majesty's Government suggest that the Commission on arrival in India should consider and decide by what machinery this work may most appropriately be discharged. This will not, of course debar the Commission from the advantage of taking evidence itself upon these subjects to whatever extent it may think desirable.

When the Commission has reported and its report has been examined by the Government of India and His Majesty's Government, it will be the duty of the latter to present proposals to Parliament, but it is not the intention of His Majesty's Government to ask the Parliament to adopt these proposals without first giving a full opportunity for India's opinion of different schools to contribute its view upon them. And, to this end, it is intended to invite Parliament to refer these proposals for consideration by a Joint Committee of both the Houses, and to facilitate the presentation to that Committee both the view of the Indian Central Legislature by a delegation who will be invited to attend and confer with the Joint Committee and also of the views of any other bodies whom the Joint Parliamentary Committee may desire to consult.

In the opinion of His Majesty's Government, the procedure contemplated fulfils to a very great extent the requisities outlined above.

## Advantages of the Commission.

Such a Commission drawn from the men of every British political party and presided over by one whose public position is due to outstanding ability and character will evidently bring fresh, trained and unaffected judgment to bear upon an immensely complex constitutional issue. Moreover, the findings of some of its own members can count in advance upon a favourable reception at the hands of Parliament which will recognise them to speak from a common platform of thought and to apply standards of judgment which Parliament will feel instinctively to be its own.

For myself, I cannot doubt that the quickest and surest path of those who desire Indian progress is by the persuasion of Parliament and that they can do this more certainly through members of both Houses of Parliament than in any other way. The Indian Nationalist has gained much if he can convince members of Parliament on the spot; and I would therefore go further and say that if those who speak for India have confidence in the case they advance on her behalf, they ought to welcome such an opportunity being afforded to as many members of the British Legislature as many be there, to come into contact with the realities of Indian life and politics. Furthermore while it is, for these reasons, of undoubted advantage to all who desire an extension of the reforms that their case should be heard in the first instances by those who can command the unquestioned confidence of Parliament, I am sanguine enough to suppose that the

me had chosen by His Majesty's Government will also assure to Indians a better opportunity than they could have enjoyed in any other way of influencing the passage of these great events. For, not only will they, through representatives of the Indian Legislatures, be able to express themselves freely to the Commission itself, but it will also be within their power to challenge in detail or principle any of the proposals made by His Majesty's Government before the Joint Select Committee of Parliament and to advocate their own solution. It should be observed moreover, that, at this stage, Parliament will not have been asked to express any opinion on particular proposals and therefore, so far as Parliament is concerned, the whole field will still be open.

"Differ as Friends, but do not Stand Aside."

I hope that there will be none, whatever may be their political opinion, who will fail to take advantage of this potent means thus presented to them of establishing direct contact between the Indian and British peoples. There will be some whose inclination, it may be, will prompt them to condemn the scheme of procedure on which His Majesty's Government has decided. Others may criticise this or that part of the proposals. The reply to these latter is that they plan outlined stands as a single, comprehensive whole and should be so regarded. Of the first, I would ask in all sincerity whether disagreement on the particular machinery to effect the end which we all alike pursue is sufficient ground for any man to stand aside and decline to lend his weight to the joint effort of the people that this undertaking represents. I can never conceal from myself that there are and will be differences of opinion between the two peoples just as there are differences of opinion within Great Britain and India on these matters. It is through disagreement and the clash of judgment that it is given to us to ultimately approach the knowledge of the Truth. It is also inevitable that on issues so momentous, differences of judgment will be founded on deep and sincere conviction, but, if difficult, our general line of conduct is surely plain. Where possible, it is our duty to bring these differences to agreement. When this is at any given moment not practicable without surrender of something fundamental to our position, it is our duty to differ as friends, each respecting the standpoint of the other and each being careful to see that we say or do nothing. This will needlessly aggravate differences which we are unable immediately to resolve.

The effect that such differences will have upon the relations between the countries will depend upon something which lies deeper than the differences themselves. All friendships are subject at times to strains which try the tempers and lay men under the necessity of exercising considerable forbearance and restraint. Such strains are indeed a sovereign test; for, just as one is the stronger for rising superior to the temptation to which another yields, so true friendship flourishes on the successful emergence from the very test which dissolve any less firmly founded partnership. In real friendship, each party is constrained to see the best in the other's case, to give credit for the best motives and place the most charitable interpretation upon actions which they might wish were otherwise. Above all, friends will strive to correct differences by appeal to the many things on which they are agreed, rather than lightly imperial friendship by insistence on points in regard to which they take conflicting views.

Thus, I would fain trust it would be in the present case. Do not think I am mistaken if I assert that it is the fixed determination of the overwhelming majority of the citizens, both of India and Great Britain, to hold firmly by the goodwill which, through many trials and it may be through some false steps on the part of each, has meant much to both. In each country, there may be from time to time misunderstanding of the other. Let us not magnify such things beyond their value. Least of all, let us not permit such transient influences to lead us to lose sight of the rich prize of achievement of a common purpose which we may assuredly win together, but can hardly win in separation. It is my most earnest hope that this joint endeavour to solve a problem, on the wise treatment of which so much depends, may be inspired by such a spirit as shall offer a good hope of reaching an issue to the great and abiding good of India and of all her sons.

## Debate in the House of Lords.

On the 24th November in the House of Lords, Lord Birkenhead moved the resolution concurring on the submission to His Majesty of the names of the members of the Statutory Commission. In the course of his speech the noble Lord said:—

My Lords, the very difficult task which I attempt to-day to discharge, is one of which, it cannot be expected that it will meet with a unanimous approval. The difficulties involved have been very great, and I may perhaps illustrate them to your Lordships, if I say that the correspondence which has taken place between myself and two successive Viceroyas, with whom I have been associated upon this subject, would certainly fill several volumes. I claim, and I claim only, that with the advantage of advice in the earlier years of my noble friend, Lord Reading, and later years of Lord Irwin, that at any rate, this whole matter has been most carefully considered, that every alternative for the proposal which I put forward has been examined, and sincere attempts have been made to appraise the advantages and disadvantages of each course, which has been recommended and pressed upon me.

### The Resolution.

The motion which I have to move is: "That this House concurs in the submission to His Majesty, of the names of the following persons, namely, Sir John Simon, Viscount Burnham, Lord Stratheona and Mr. Walsh, Colonel Lane-Fox and Major Attlee, to act as a commission for the purpose of Section 84 "A" of the Government of India Act".

I shall say something in a moment, as to the reason which led the Government to the conclusion that the Commission necessarily to be appointed either this year or the next or in the early months of the year afterwards, should be a purely Parliamentary Commission.

But I may allow myself the grateful task at the outset of my speech, of saying something in justification of the names, which I recommend to the House.

### Sir John Simon.

Sir John Simon occupies a position at the Bar of England, which has not been so completely filled by any advocate of the Bar in my recollection. He brings to the difficult tasks which await him, a mind ingenious, acute, well-stored and assiduous, and it would indeed be wrong if we did not, in this House, recognise that he is making an immense sacrifice, as men count sacrifice, in undertaking the difficult duties which await him. I do not, of course, mean that Sir John Simon is merely making a financial sacrifice, but he is in a position in which, as one of the masters of his profession, he has no particular difficulties or anxieties in its discharge, for he is too consummately equipped in that profession to apprehend them. But he is undertaking duties of great novelty and of the utmost complexity in circumstances, in which it would only be possible for a very sanguine man to predicate that a solution would be obtainable, which would be acceptable, not only here, but in India. No man can establish a large claim upon the confidence of his fellow-countrymen than he. He undertakes a great task of great difficulty involving immense personal sacrifices, and I am certain of this, that the wish of your Lordships will be to give him every support in the difficult task which in the high spirit of public service, he has undertaken.

## Lord Burnham.

There is another member of the Commission, a member of Your Lordship's House, who has, for a long period of time, rendered public service. I mean my noble friend, Lord Burnham, whose special activity has happily been in the direction of making us better known in the outlying portions of the Empire. I have been aware of many of his travels. I know of no Dominion which he has visited where his pleasant and tactful personality has not done much to create good feeling between us and those whom he has visited. For him, too, the sacrifice is considerable, for I may tell your Lordships that, not only will it be necessary for those who are to be the Commissioners, to spend some four months in India in the next cold weather but it will certainly be the result of their earlier efforts in India, on which material will be accumulated, that will require sifting and examination on their return to this country, and they have then undertaken the very much greater labour, involved in their second visit, of spending some 6 or 7 months, travelling through the various provinces, acquainting themselves in great detail with the matters, which are relevant for their consideration and necessary for their decision.

Lord Burnham, again, has undertaken this task in a spirit of public duty. I am sure that Your Lordships will appreciate that a man who is no longer very young, has undertaken a burden of this kind in the public interest.

## Lord Stratheona.

Another member of Your Lordships' house, a younger man, Lord Stratheona recommended to us not only by a name which we honour, but also by an individuality of character and exhibition of industry, which have carried him from an inferior plane of our activities, to a not unimportant post in the party organisation has abandoned this and, in my judgment, rightly abandoned it, for the purpose of a large and more important public service. I am glad that a member of your Lordships' House with energy and youth and competence for this task has been prepared for and has undertaken its burdens. I come now for a moment to the members of the House of Commons.

## Col. Lane-Fox.

Of Colonel Lane-Fox, I think, I need not speak in terms of any particular recommendation. He is, indeed, known to many of your Lordships in his own personality, and to all by name. He has discharged more than one high public position, and to the discharge of every position, he has brought equal confidence, industry and conscientiousness.

## Hon. A. Cadogan.

The Hon'ble A. Cadogan is known, I suppose, to all your Lordships, who were members of the House of Commons. Those of your Lordships who had not the good fortune, ever to be the members of another place, I may remind that he was the tactful, courteous and able Secretary of the Speaker of the House of Commons, for many years. If any man can retain popularity with all sections of the House of Commons, who is the Secretary of Mr. Speaker for a period of many years, I would say of that man that he has many qualities which entitle him to sit upon this Commission.



**Mr. MacDonald's Attitude.**

I will say a word or two of the representatives of the Opposition. Mr. Walsh and Major Attlee. Here, I must make a slight digression. I thought it my duty to enter into some discussion, with the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, at an early stage in development of this matter, and I would desire, in the most public manner, to place it upon record, that consistently with his own position, his own responsibilities and his own discussions, he has behaved as one would have expected a man to behave, who, at one time, held the high office of Prime Minister in this country, and who, for all we know, may still hold it again. It would be giving an entirely wrong impression if I were to claim that, Mr. MacDonald accepted any responsibility for the particular proposals which I bring before the House to day. He did not accept them. I did not ask him to accept them. I did not expect that he should accept them. These responsibilities are of his Majesty's Government alone. We accept them and we shall accept the consequences of them. It is perfectly open to any supporter of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald either in this House or another place, to say, "We think that you would have exercised wiser discretion if you had adopted a different form of the Commission. That is responsibility, it is not ours." Let it therefore, be made perfectly plain, when I say that I accepted the advice of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, in the case of the two gentlemen, who are to be the Labour members of this Commission. Let it be made perfectly plain, that the position which Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and his friends are entitled to assume, is this. It is your scheme and not ours, but we would not take and do not take the responsibility of saying, when one you have adopted this scheme, that the leaders of the Labour Party in this country, propose to boycott it. My Lords, after considerable discussion between Mr. MacDonald and myself, the two names were put forward and were accepted.

**Mr. Walsh.**

The first was Mr. Stephen Walsh. My Lords, Mr. Walsh is an old Lancashire member of Parliament. I have known him well for twenty-one years. He entered Parliament at the same election as myself. I know well how great his reputation is with the mining community of Lancashire and I know too that, as the Secretary of State for War, he stamped an unaggressive but still a firm and real personality upon those with whom he associated at the War Office. I greatly welcome his inclusion upon this Commission.

**Major Attlee.**

My Lords, I am not able to say more of Major Attlee than this. He comes to me with a very strong recommendation not only from the leader of the Labour Party for efficiency, capacity and industry, but those of my own party in the House of Commons to whom I have spoken have been as forward in his praise as those who recommended him to me for inclusion as a member of this Commission. I am myself unhappily almost ten years remote now from the House of Commons and therefore I had not and have not the pleasure of Major Attlee's acquaintance.

My Lords, such are the men who have undertaken these burdens. I have no hesitation in recommending them warmly to your Lordships' acceptance and I think we are fortunate indeed in having discovered seven

gentlemen, many of them members of the Commons and, in addition to the risks which I have already indicated, exposed to electioneering difficulties which may arise who knows when, who nevertheless have been prepared to add these to other risks and inconveniences which they have undertaken.

#### A Parliamentary Commission.

My Lords, a grave question now requires discussion and it is here that I apprehend that a difference of opinion which is founded upon principle may develop between myself and the Opposition. Let me state it shortly. The question is, should this Commission be a Parliamentary Commission consisting of members of the Commons and the House of Lords or should it be a Commission in which Indian members would have found a place? My Lords, I have given for four years, ever since I undertook the responsibilities of this office, my deep and constant attention to this topic. I have satisfied myself, and I am not without hope that I may satisfy your Lordships and the public, that the decision which I recommend is not only right, but is the only decision which is reconcilable with the very purposes which all of us have in view. My Lords, the problem of India is one the main features of which historically are very familiar and which I do not propose to examine in great detail to-day. Nevertheless, I shall presume to say one or two things quite plainly. When we went to India in that commercial guise which has frequently in history been our earliest approach to future dominions, we found it a country, discordant and dissentient within itself, of warring sects with no prospect of a stable and unified dominion. I examine not at all, for it would be remote from and irrelevant to my purpose, the early history. I collect from that history only the conclusion which is logically required for my present argument, and, I state it plainly and boldly. It is that the intervention of this country in India and that intervention alone, saved it at the relevant period from a welter of anarchy. Now, my Lords, I approach the present. It has been my duty to talk in the last three years to many distinguished Indians of every faith, every persuasion, every bent of political thought. I have asked all of those who were inclined to be critical of our attitude in relation to the future constitutional development of India this question.

#### Question of Britain's Withdrawal.

Do you desire that the British Navy should be withdrawn from India? Do you desire that the Civil Service should be withdrawn from India? Do you desire that the protection of the British Navy should be withdrawn from the Indian shores? I have never found one Indian, however hostile to this Government, however critical of our proposals in relation to the Indian development, who desired that the Army should be withdrawn, that the Indian Civil Service should be withdrawn, or that the protection of the Navy should be withdrawn. Why do I state this position in a form so plain? It is to found upon it, as its logical conclusion, another. We undertook by an Act of Parliament—that act which substituted for the authority of the Company, the authority of the British Government—Parliamentary responsibility. Does anyone really suppose that the Parliament of this country, which by an Act of Parliament assumed to itself the responsibilities and functions of the Company, which, as the historical facts that I have shortly stated show, is still confronted by precisely the same problems in India as confronted our predecessors at the moment when in the first place, the

activities of our commercial and trading bodies supported by the force of arms, composed the warring sects of India, when it is still concerned, that our withdrawal to-morrow would reproduce precisely the conditions which existed when we went there? How can any one in those circumstances pretend that whatever point may be disputable the responsibility of Parliament not only does not still survive but is not an exclusive responsibility, from which Parliament can divorce itself, without being false to the long and glorious history of the association of England and India.

#### Why a Parliamentary Commission.

If this be the responsibility of Parliament, considerations of no small importance arise. I had to decide before making a recommendation to my colleagues, which they accepted as to the character of this Commission, whether or not it ought to be the Parliamentary Commission. This, as I understand, is the point in relation to which doubts are principally entertained by those who criticise our proposal. Let me, therefore, examine it with the indulgence of the House with some care. If I am right in saying that it was Parliament, which was responsible for that first momentous change, which deprived the Company of its political activities, if from that moment Parliament has been charged with responsibility, how can we divorce ourselves from that responsibility at this moment? Observe, it is only eight years since this same Parliament, by what is known as the Montagu-Chelmsford reform, by a great public Act, created the constitution which is now to be the subject of revision and re-examination.

It is sometimes said by our critics in India that it is for India to decide upon the form of the constitution suitable for themselves, and then for British Parliament formally to pass it. This suggestion has not been lightly made. It has been seriously made by men who are entitled that their observations shall be seriously accepted. I can only make this comment, I have twice in the three years during which I have been Secretary of State, invited our critics in India, not only to put forward their own suggestions for a constitution but to indicate to us the form, which, in their judgment the constitution should take. That offer is still open. It is most expressly repeated, as I shall show in a moment, in these proposals which we make for the association of Indians with the activities of the Commission.

#### Parliament's Duties and Responsibilities.

But let it be plainly said, and it cannot be too plainly said, that Parliament cannot and will not repudiate its own duties, its own responsibility in this matter. If anybody seriously supposes, either here or in India, that we are mechanically to accept a constitution without our own primary and ultimate responsibility for judging upon it, they have no contact with the realities of the actual situation. We therefore form the clear view that this Commission must be a Parliamentary Commission. It was suggested, and is being suggested still, that we ought to have associated Indians with the Commissioners, in order not to inflict a supposed affront upon Indian susceptibilities. That consideration deserves the most careful attention and, indeed, I may make it quite plain that I have given it for a period of three years my almost unbroken attention. I have considered it from every angle. There is no argument which can be put forward in its support, which I have not already to the best measure of my capacity examined. The question, whether I am right or wrong, cannot

be answered without deciding what is the true function of this Commission. The function of the Commission is a simple one. It is to report to Parliament. When once the Commissioners have reported, they are *functi officio*. The task then belongs to others. What is it that Parliament was entitled to require from these reporters? What could these reporters contribute that would be most helpful to Parliament? I find myself in no doubt as to the answer to both these questions. Parliament could most be helped by the opinions of men of admitted integrity and independence, without any commitments of any kind at all, in the past events of history, who went there with one object and one object only, and that was, to acquaint themselves with the actualities of the problem, and to equip themselves to be the wise advisers of Parliament.

"Exceptionally Intelligent Jury.

We in Britain are accustomed to pride ourselves upon the jury system. It is frequently said that the collective intelligence of 12 jurymen is incomparably greater than the individual intelligence of any one among their number. I hope it will not be considered that I am making any observation slighting the distinguished men who are members of the Commission if I say that I conceive of them as an exceptionally intelligent jury going to India without any preconceived ideas at all and with no task except to come to Britain and give the honest result of the examination they make of Indian politics. I have only two things to add on the issue whether we are right or wrong in deciding upon a purely Parliamentary Commission. I have no doubt whatever, speaking as a constitutional lawyer, that the framers of the original and determining Act when they spoke of a Commission contemplated a Parliamentary Commission. It is true that they did not so state in terms but I draw the inference that they did not so state it, because they thought it so obvious. I observe Lord Chelmsford in the House. I am not entitled, unless he thinks it proper to contribute to it, to ask his opinion but I should be greatly astonished if he is not prepared to state at the time when the Commission was contemplated in the governing Act. There was no other idea but that it should be entirely parliamentary. My Lords, what would have been the alternative? It is said lightly by those who have not considered very deeply the facts that a few Indian representatives ought to have been made members of the Commission. I was reading a speech reported in "The Pioneer" (mail edition) a few days ago by a most distinguished member of the Legislative Assembly, who is himself a Hindu of high position and ability. It was the speech Mr. Goswami made at the All-India Congress Committee, a meeting not altogether favourable to His Majesty's Government or the present Secretary of State. He said that he did not know if there were any Mahomedan organisations in the country which represented the opinion of the Mahomedans, but so far as his own community was concerned he was certain that there was no such organisation which could speak in the name of the Hindu community. We know it therefore from a very prominent member of the Hindu community that in his judgment there is no one in all India who can speak officially in the name of the Hindu community.

As to the opinions of Moslems, while we heard some repercussions in the newspapers during the last few days it has been my duty most carefully and in consultation with the Viceroy to study the expressions of opinion which have appeared in the Indian press and appraise their value. I am

not in the least depressed or discouraged by them. I knew there would be many who, whatever the proposal Government brought forward, would be dissatisfied with it, but I find many elements in the great and heterogeneous population who will not be dissatisfied and who in no event will make themselves a party to boycott. Don't let us ever forget that the population of India—I suppose a general figure will be sufficient for my purpose—is somewhere in the neighbourhood of three hundred millions, of whom some seventy millions belong to Native States and are not primarily engaged with the present enquiry. I shall suppose that out of the 230 millions remaining, about two hundred and twenty millions have never heard of the Commission and I do not believe it would be a bold prediction to say that about two hundred millions are unaware that they are living under the benefits of the Montagu Chelmsford reforms. One must retain some contact with reality when dealing with the Indian population. My Lords, remember how infinitesimal is the number of those who vote in the elections and of that fractional percentage who vote, how large a proportion consists of the illiterate class who mark their papers because they are unable to read. We in this House and those of another place have responsibility, not for the loudly articulate India, but for real India as a whole, that India which consists, as I have said, of three hundred million people. I only deal with it because I think it fails to be dealt with.

I saw it stated in the Commons that a book which created wide public attention called "Mother India" written by Miss Mayo, I think, was inspired either by the Government of India or by the Government of England. I should not deal with the matter if I were not struck by the complete irresponsibility which would enable Members of Parliament to make a statement so absolutely false and without a vestige of evidence. I most expressly invite the lady either to withdraw that charge or to produce the evidence.

#### Indians on the Commission.

I am dealing with the complexity of interests involved and am inviting the House to consider how it would have been necessary for me to proceed if I had taken a different decision or if I had been supported by my colleagues in taking a different decision and if we decided there should be Indians on the Commission. In the first place it would have been evidently necessary to have a Hindu member although I should have been in the difficulty which Mr. Goswami's statement made plain, that is, that there is no Hindu organisation. I suppose it would have been necessary in the first place to provide myself with a representative Hindu as a member of the Commission. In the next place the moment I had announced the name of a Hindu it would indisputably become necessary to provide for the Non-Brahmin Hindu, because the idea that the Hindu would be accepted as a representative member by the Non-Brahmin Hindu is to those who know facts ludicrous. In the next place I must have a Mahomedan and a Sikh, that is four native members to begin with. Let me inform the House, for these matters are not very widely known, that various remaining classes have in fact established their right to separate representation in the Provincial Legislatures, so that their claim is quite certain to be put forward in this connection. They will say, "Do not tell me I am to be represented by a Hindu or a Non-Brahmin Hindu or by a Mahomedan or a Sikh. My case is a different one," and they have in fact achieved recognition of their claim in one or other of the Provincial Assemblies. I take, firstly, the Christians. I

suppose that they are entitled to be at least considered in India. They are a growing community and they would certainly desire their views should be put forward.

Let me take the case of the depressed classes. There is in India a vast population even in relation to the numbers with which we are dealing, a population of sixty millions of the depressed classes. Their condition is not quite as terrible, quite as poignant as it has been in the past, but it is still terrible and poignant. They are repelled from all social intercourse. If they come between the gracious light of the sun and one who despised them the sun is disfigured for that man. They cannot drink at the public water-supply. They must make diversions of miles in order to satisfy thirst and they are tragically known and they have been known for generations as the "untouchable." There are sixty millions of them in India. Am I to have a representative of them upon this Commission? Never, never would I form a Commission nor would anyone in a democratic country, nor would my friends opposite recommend it, from which you have excluded a member of this class which more than any other requires representation, if you are indeed to put the matter to a mixed jury of the kind I am indicating. I have not dealt with others, aborigines and inhabitants of backward tracts, or special representatives of the cotton trade, all of whom have been strong enough to assert their claim to individual representation upon provincial assemblies. My proposition is more general. It would be impossible, to form a Commission other than a Parliamentary Commission which would not excite reasonable complaints of exclusion on the part of persons who have very strong claims to be included and what would the help be to Parliament? It is, I suppose, conceded that if I had had representatives of classes whom I have indicated, I could not possibly have excluded the Indian Civil Service. After all, the Indian Civil Service has deeply rooted interests in India. It has rendered a prodigious service over ages. Mr. Lloyd George once said that it is the steel frame work around which a whole building has been constructed. It is not, I imagine, suggested that if you admitted other than Parliamentary representatives, you could exclude members of the Indian Civil Service. Had we proceeded upon those lines, we should have found ourselves with a Commission of some eighteen or twenty people. That such a body would have been convenient for the task assigned to them, no instructed person, I believe, will seriously contend.

But, let us attempt to imagine the resulting situation, had a body, so unwieldy, in fact, been appointed. Does anyone suppose, there would have been a unanimous report? There may not be a unanimous report now, but at any rate we shall have a report which proceeds upon the same general point of view and principle. But, what would be the report from a body such as I indicated? What guidance would it give Parliament in the immensely difficult task that will await Parliament one or two or three years from now? It is obvious that because the tension and acuteness to-day of these unhappy communal quarrels are greater in my judgment than they had been some twelve or thirteen years ago in Indian history it is obvious you would have a very strong partisan Hindu report, a very strong Moslem report and three or four other dissenting reports from various sections deeply interested in the decisions which are taken. Imagine the Parliament being assisted by the disclosure of dissenting views of this kind. I ask for indulgent judgment, as to whether, confronted with this alternative I have not

taken the right view when I said that seven members of the Lords and Commons, well-known and respected in each House, shall go out, using every means of associating Indian opinion with them, and shall shortly pass and present to Parliament a report Parliament will be in position to understand, and by which it may usefully be guided.

But, it may indeed be very reasonably said: "Are Indians to be denied any opportunity of contributing to these decisions?" Had I made any such proposal, I should have known it is foredoomed to failure, not only in India, not only in the Commons, but indeed in this House. There is as great a determination to secure fairplay for reasonable Indian aspirations in this House as in the Commons.

#### Indian Committee's Functions.

Let me make plain what our proposals are, in this respect, for, indeed, think they have been very greatly misunderstood. It is our purpose that the Commission, when it visits India, should establish a contact with the Committee appointed for that purpose by the Central Legislature. I pause here to point out that, constitutionally, the Central Legislature is a body who most authoritatively can appoint members from its own numbers to confer with the members of the Commission. I assume that the appointment will be made because I cannot believe that those who are anxious to persuade the Government of this country that they are fit for a further measure of Self-Government will undertake the deep and most unwise responsibility of refusing to associate themselves with us in the first genuine efforts which we make to ascertain the road we must tread in common together if we are indeed to reach that goal. I therefore do not, and will not, assume that they will be guilty of the unwisdom refusing to appoint such a committee. Now, what would be the function of that Committee. It has been most irrationally assumed that they are merely to appear as witnesses before the Commission. That is not the case. They are invited, in a spirit of great sincerity, to co-operate as colleagues with the Commission. It is contemplated that they shall prepare in advance of the Commission's arrival—if they find themselves able to do it, this next cold weather or if they find themselves within the limited period unable to do it a year later—that they shall prepare their own proposals and come before the Commission and say, "These are our suggestions."

We claimed, and they claimed, that the West cannot devise a constitution for the East, that you cannot put Eastern wine into Western bottles. Well, if there be behind that claim (and I don't doubt it) sincerity of real feeling we afford them an opportunity of confronting our Commission with their own proposals, which can be made public, which can be analysed and criticised and can be accepted or rejected after that analysis and criticism. No greater opportunity was ever given than is afforded to the Central Committee in the first place by the suggestion that they should confront the Commission with their constructive proposals.

#### How the Commission will Develop.

Now let us try to see how the Commission will develop. It is very difficult to supply one's mind with accurate pre-vision to so many unknown, and, in the main unforeseeable, contingencies, but I will tell your Lordships how I think the Commission will develop in its activities. They will retain contact with the Committee of the Central Legislature, as long as their

deliberations extend to matters with which the Central Legislature is principally concerned and they will temporarily lose contact, when they are journeying to the provinces, but even here they will not be deprived of the constant refreshment of Indian opinion, for it is proposed (I see no recognition of this fact in any of the Indian papers) that, in every province in which they journey, there will be created there Committees of the Provincial Legislatures which will discharge some consultative functions with the Commissioners as is discharged at the centre of Government by the Committee of the Central Legislature. At no point, therefore, will the representatives of the Indian Legislatures be deprived of the opportunity of influencing the views of the Commissioners.

Let no one make the mistake of supposing that we are attempting to interpose into the scheme any official members. Members of the Central Committee and members of the Provincial Committees will all be elected and non-officials. I claim that no one could have done more than we have done to protect ourselves by making it certain that the Commission's report to the Parliament should be at least illumined by the knowledge of what contemporary Indian politicians are deeply thinking.

But observe our next stage. Not a word has been said in the recognition of this. Yet, let it be pointed out, that the enormous opportunity of intervening at the most critical moment of all is contained in our proposals. It is well known that we intend that after the Commission has presented its report, proposals of the Government on it will be sent, according to precedent, to a joint conference of both the Houses of Parliament. Your Lordships or those who were interested in the Indian affairs, at that time, will not have forgotten how considerable was the contribution, how unrelenting the industry of the Joint Committee which reported upon the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals. It is our intention to create a similar body.

Supposing that it be a fact that despite the constant contact in India between the Central Committee at the heart of the Government and Provincial Committees of the Legislatures in each Province, to which the Commission will journey, if, despite all those opportunities of ascertaining opinion, the Indians have failed to make good their view upon the independent, unbiassed judgment of the Commission they are not even then compelled to acquiesce. They will on the whole have been given an opportunity which, in my judgment, has never before been given in the whole history of constitution-making to any people who are in their position. We invite them at the Central Government to appoint a Committee to come and sit with our Joint Committee. They can examine the Commission's report. They have been even given a function, if they could only understand it, more important than that of the Commission itself. When once the Commission has made its report it is finished, but its critics remain and its critics are most formally specially invited to come and sit with the General Committee in Parliament and develop criticisms and objections they feel to the Commission's report.

I cannot say more than that being deeply committed as we are, deeply committed to the view which I have attempted to justify in argument that this Commission must be Parliamentary in character we have neglected no resources which either our own ingenuity could suggest or our advisers could put forward to carry with us as far as we could Indian opinion at every stage.



## No Departure from Central Scheme.

If, without the destruction of our central schemes, from which we do not intend to depart, the noble Lords can suggest any method in which I can make it even plainer that our purpose is not to affront Indian opinion, but rather to conciliate and make it friendly to us, it shall most deeply be considered. But I add one word of caution only ; we must take no step which would lead to the risk that we shall have two reports proceeding from two Commissions. The responsibility, as I have made it plain, is and must be the responsibility of Parliament. We have conceived of every means open to our imagination to associate with the conclusions which the Commission will present to Parliament Indian opinions, even India prejudice. As long as it does not destroy our scheme we will listen with sympathy to any suggestion. We are satisfied that we have discharged in the best interests not only of this country, but of India itself, the duty, which we have inherited from others, of composing the Statutory Commission.

Lord OLIVIER said that the appointment of the Commission had an unfortunate reception. Government had been very unfortunate in the circumstances in which their intentions were disclosed before any statement was made, but he felt strongly that Government and the Secretary of State had to thank themselves to some extent for the atmosphere in which it had been received. He did not think that Lord Birkenhead had been at all happy on previous occasions in the ground he gave for the appointment of the Commission. For, he had repeatedly taken the view that the matter could not be considered unless the Indian people and politicians showed signs of sense of responsibility and co-operation, whereas that consideration could not for a moment be expected to appeal to the Indian politicians. While it might be said that two-hundred millions of Indian people might know nothing about the question of appointing the Commission, there could be no question that Indian political reform parties generally did pervert the conscious political will of the Indian people and they desired means of self-government.

Lord Olivier then proceeded to ridicule the view that the Commission was a sort of examination paper set for Indians to see how far they were fit for self-government, when lights suddenly went out and the House was plunged in complete darkness. Lord Olivier continued to speak in darkness for a time but the House was then adjourned for half an hour till light returned.

Lord Olivier, discussing the personnel of the Commission, said that when it was announced, the list seemed to him likely to be disappointing to most Indians who would consider it not of a sufficient calibre. He would be very sorry to see a movement on the part of Indian leaders to boycott the Commission. He opined that some of them had been rather precipitate in their action. For, having waited so long before committing themselves to non-co-operation, they might have waited a little longer. He hoped that Lord Birkenhead's statement would lead them to reconsider their position.

Dealing with the reasons for appointing the Parliamentary Commission and the great difficulties in the way of having a representative Indian Commission or a representative mixed Commission, Lord Olivier said that, when in office, he had often considered the matter and had always come to the conclusion that it would not be possible to appoint any other kind of

Commission than Government had done. The Labour Party, which at least had always been regarded as desiring to do the fullest possible justice to India, had decided to support the Commission without any intention whatever of routing off Indians and having the fullest confidence in them. Lord Olivier thought it was ridiculous to suppose that, after the friendly conversations Lord Birkenhead had with many Indians, it would be possible for him to have it in his mind to do anything which he knew would affront Indians.

He suggested that there had been a lack of preparation in connection with the appointment of the Commission similar to that which had caused the failure of the Geneva Conference, and he regretted that Government, before making original proposals, had not secured the co-operation of the representatives of the Indian people.

He suggested that, when the Commission left for India, it should make it its primary duty to consult on equal terms with a committee appointed by the Indian Legislature. There should be joint meetings of the two Commissions and report of those Commissions to the Houses of Parliament.

Lord Olivier said that the Commission would come into contact with genuine and patriotic Indians. The Labour Party had every confidence that the Commissioners would act in accordance with the spirit of the declarations made. Lord Olivier emphasised how much better Parliamentary Commission would be able to appreciate the value of evidence with the assistance of such Indian Committee appointed by the Indian legislature. His friends in India would realise that the Labour Party sympathised with the movement for Self-Government. The Commission was only a step and it was the best practical step which could have been taken at the present time. Despite the rather unfortunate circumstances he hoped Indians would withdraw from their attitude proposing to boycott the Commission as that would leave the situation as between England and India in a very deplorable and most hopeless position. Lord Olivier said that if Indians did not obtain all they wanted, they would obtain a great deal more than they could possibly obtain if they boycotted the Commission. He hoped that the Commission would at any rate place Indian affairs on a basis of continuous progress and development. He hoped this would be the final enquiry of this sort which with the assistance of Indians would formulate lines on which continuous progress might be made. He hoped Indians would even now abandon the attitude of boycott and see if they could come together on the Commission appointed by legislature and present the British Commission with a scheme, for that would have enormous and overwhelming influence in the result of the Commission. Lord Olivier proceeded to say "We know that Indians did not want to get rid of the British connection and the army and navy immediately. In time they did not want immediate Swaraj or Home Rule which was impossible and an unthinkable thing. They wanted a scheme which would give them in a number of years complete and responsible Dominion Government. Such scheme was not possible to-morrow or next year but a scheme was possible which would as rapidly as possible work out and produce that result. He wished the Commission most heartily a very prosperous and successful career, and trusted that the passing squall which had arisen through really undeserved suspicions of the intentions of Government though caused by prejudice created by the members of the Conservative Party, would blow over and the commission bring its labours to a prosperous end.

The Marquis of READING then said :—

The subject of the earlier appointment of the Statutory Commission has been discussed many times and by various Secretaries of State. I think I am right in saying that during my period of office I discussed it with the four Secretaries of State in different Governments and it is now to me a satisfaction to find that a conclusion has been reached to appoint the Commission at an earlier date than provided by the Statute of 1919.

I cannot but wish that the speech of the Secretary of State to which we have all listened with so much pleasure and interest had been delivered earlier. It might have prevented much that has happened since. It is useless now to go back on that period but nevertheless it seems to me that it is most unfortunate and in some respects incomprehensible that, whilst we had had a statement made as early as November 8th which was in consequence of a premature and incomplete disclosure from India of the names of the Commissioners, we should not have had an opportunity of a debate in the Lords which would have helped very much to clear the atmosphere.

In Lord Birkenhead's speech and also in Lord Olivier's there is material which I trust will cause Indians to ponder over seriously before they proceed with the movement which in some quarters has been definitely adopted and announced. The difficulties of an earlier debate no doubt arose from the fact that as the Statute had not yet been passed which permitted the earlier appointment of the Commission it would be impossible constitutionally (so I gathered) to discuss the appointment of those who were to form the Commission. It seems to me there might have been ways found to enable us to proceed with the debate and at least to listen to so much of Lord Birkenhead's observations to-day, at least a fortnight earlier. But all that is past and what we have now to do is to attempt to rid India of the notion that Government intended to place any stamp of inferiority upon or humiliate in any way Indian politicians or Indian Nationalists or that there has been the slightest desire to say that the Indian is incapable of standing on an equality with the British in matter of this character. That certainly was not the idea, I am sure.

For my part I give the most unqualified support to the proposal put forward by Government. This is in no sense a party question. India fortunately is outside party controversy. The main grounds of the policy are well sifted. They were adopted by Parliament. Several Governments have been in existence since the Act of 1919 and there has been no deviation from the policy which was declared in 1917 and carried out by the Statute of 1919 and I am confident there will be none because the statement made and especially the declaration by His Majesty on the advice of his Ministers to the Indian people is in itself a charter which cannot be abrogated and from which there can be no deviation but the real points that divide Nationalists in India and those not prepared to go forward as fast as the Nationalists would desire are questions of time, method and the various steps that might be taken on the road to that self government which is promised to India within the words of the Statute.

I myself often wondered and considered what form the Commission should take. I am emboldened, especially by the observations made by Lord Olivier, he referred to certain proposals made to and discussed with me when I was Viceroy, to remind him that when his Government was in office,

proposals of this character relating to an earlier appointment of the Commission were discussed between his Government and myself.

Lord Olivier interjected : " I said those would appear in the noble Earl's memoirs."

Lord Reading retorted :—" Well, I am not going to wait until they appear."

This has been the question agitating the mind of every Secretary of State and of the Viceroy of the time of myself and my successor. There has been no period at which we have not been discussing it. I find some satisfaction in the thought that I always favoured appointing a Commission in the cold weather of 1927 and I am very glad indeed that my successor Lord Irwin has come to the same conclusion and that Government itself has arrived at that decision.

The real difficulty with which we have to deal concerns the composition of the Commission. It is said it is an affront to India to appoint a Parliamentary Commission and exclude Indians. I cannot but think there is a misapprehension in the minds of those who have come to that conclusion—very serious misapprehension, it is not to be wondered at. I think we must be a little careful not to blame Indians for any views they may have expressed, when it is remembered that they know of the Commission and its composition before they were aware of any of the very admirable safeguards introduced by Government.

If the Commission were to be appointed composed of men with experience of India, who had lived part of their life in India, had perhaps held office as Governors of provinces and, various persons who for one reason or another had considerable knowledge of Indian affairs, I should have said without hesitation that we could not have appointed such a Commission without appointing a number of Indians and I doubt very much whether there would have been any division of opinion on that subject. But that is not the Commission appointed. It is a totally different one. Indeed the selection made is of gentlemen Members of Parliament of both Houses, who have had no special experience of India, who may perhaps have paid a visit to India but merely as sightseers and tourists and who have had really nothing to do with the administration of the affairs of India and that is the central point on which all argument must rest; for it is quite impossible to find any gentleman who has passed his life in India, who has perhaps been born and lived with his family there, who could approach this question with the same standpoint as those who have been appointed and who will sail for India in order that they may inform themselves and then inform British Parliament.

#### The Muddiman Enquiry.

I wondered sometimes, when reflecting upon the Commission, composed of British and Indians, how it would be possible to find Indians who had not already committed themselves to a definite view and I think I shall be borne out by every one with a knowledge of Indian politics if I say there is no leading Indian politician who might not aspire to be a leader, who has not committed himself again and again on the very subject we are now discussing. It occurred to me during the debate that the earliest occasion on which I remember some resolution in favour of anticipating the date of the Commission and appointing it much earlier than 1929, curiously enough, arose actually in 1921 just after Parliaments had been inaugurated and

almost within a month or two of my succeeding to Lord Chelmsford. It was one of the earliest resolutions I encountered in India and it certainly was during 1921. That was the state of affairs which continued until 1923 when there were resolutions and in 1924 there were definite resolutions to that effect. A committee was appointed, of which Your Lordships are no doubt aware, which was called the Reforms Inquiry Committee. It was very often called the Muddiman Committee. It was composed of Indians and British. Sir Alexander Muddiman who was then the Home Member and Leader for Government in the Legislative Assembly, was the Chairman. Associated with him were two British members, Sir Charles Innes, who was a member of the Viceroy's Council for Commerce and Sir Arthur Froom, who was the unofficial European representative.

#### The National Demand.

The other six composing the Commission were Indians. I do not desire to travel into the history of that Commission. I only refer to it to point out that as a result there was a very full debate in the Legislative Assembly in 1925 in which resolutions were formulated representing the views of those who favoured an immediate advance and who stated from their viewpoint what they wished Government to do. There was a very long resolution which formulated the Constitution. It left details to be settled by a Round Table Conference or by a Commission but substantially what they wished and the views were that there must be both a Central Legislature and Provincial Legislatures, composed of representatives elected on a wide franchise and that the Governor-General in Council should be responsible to the Central Legislature. Finance and various matters were dealt with and there were certain reservations regarding the Army into which I need not go but it was definitely shaped by the leaders of political thought in India, certainly by those who were taking a prominent part in the debate in the Legislative Assembly. I noticed the names of those who spoke strongly in favour of those resolutions and who of course were entitled to represent their views with all the force they could command. They were doing it in a perfectly constitutional manner, and although, as Government, we might not agree with them and thought they were proceeding too fast and going too far, yet no fault could be found with their manner of presenting the case or with the resolutions which from their viewpoint they advanced.

#### Exclusion of Nationalists.

But all those who made themselves responsible for that definite declaration are now taking part largely in the agitation which is proceeding in India for boycotting the Commission. A question I have put myself and which I have no doubt the Secretary of State must have considered again and again is: Would it be possible to appoint a Commission in which leaders of Nationalist opinion could participate with the knowledge that they themselves, not once but over and over again, have committed themselves to a definite view as to the policy for which they wished and from which they would not depart? It seems to me that it is really putting men on the Commission with the knowledge that the opinion they would express are the opinions they have already expressed. I am prepared to admit they would sit on the Commission with every desire to be perfectly fair and keep an open mind. Nevertheless, they have been thinking about this subject for a very long time and, as I have indicated, have already given pledges

from which it would seem very difficult for them to recede. I mention that again merely for the purpose of illustrating the difficulties there would have been had Government set about appointing a Commission composed of those with Indian experience and left these men out. It would at once have been a challenge to Indian political opinion and thought and it would have been assumed that it had been done purposely with the object either of humiliating them or of preventing their voices and opinions from having a full weight.

#### No Alternative but Parliamentary Commission.

Confronted with all these difficulties and those mentioned already by the Secretary of State, which I won't repeat, it seems to me there was no alternative but a Parliamentary Commission. I cannot profess to say what was in the minds of Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford when the particular clause of the Statute was drafted and when they came to the conclusion that there should be a revision. I don't know what they had in mind but I should be very surprised to find that they had definitely ruled out altogether a Parliamentary Commission. I should not be surprised to learn from them that what they always contemplated was a Commission of Parliamentary representatives from Britain. I have arrived at my conclusion entirely unaided by the Secretary of State. By that I mean that, although I had with him during the period I was Viceroy and since many discussions on Indian affairs and on this subject, I was not aware of the decision of the Government to appoint a Parliamentary Commission until just a little before the announcement was made.

That enables me to say that my views are quite independent, quite free and unbiassed by anything that may have been said recently at any rate on this subject by the Secretary of State to me. And that conclusion to which I came is the conclusion which Government had already reached. I cannot think there was any other course open.

#### The Olivier Proposals.

Although it is a great satisfaction to find there is no division of opinion in the Lords regarding the appointment of the Commission and certainly none regarding its members, I was a little troubled in my mind by the suggestions of Lord Olivier. I do not propose to analyse proposals. I do not know whether the Secretary of State had them before him when he was speaking. All I will say is that I should have thought those proposals, in the language which he read to us and which I presume therefore represents formally what is desired by the party, were quite impossible of acceptance. Without attempting to travel into them in detail to suggest for a moment that there should be two reports, one by an Indian Committee—that is of those gentlemen who be in India, constituting the Committee that was to be formed—and another by the Commission to be appointed in Britain, would really be placing the Parliamentary Commission in a position which I do not think I am exaggerating when I describe it as impossible.

#### “Dispassionate Hearing” for India.

If one draws a picture of what would happen in such conditions, one immediately arrives at the result that chaos must ensue. You would have two totally different reports, I suppose. In any event I do not intend to go further into those proposals. They are matters for His Majesty's Government. I am merely expressing the views which I have reached and of those

who are associated with me in this House. There is much to be done although I could not go anything like the length suggested by my Noble Friend. I believe no better plan could be devised, certainly I am unable to think of one. There has been no more elaborate plan prepared to safeguard the interests of Indian politicians and of those who although not politicians may nevertheless desire to be heard upon this subject, than the provisions that have been made no doubt in consultation between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. It is especially with reference to those safeguards that I should like to make a few observations. One cannot tell how much of what one may say in this House may travel to India. I have received telegrams from leading Indian politicians with whom I was on terms of friendship in India, appealing to me in this respect. My answer must be that all safeguards they really could desire are already provided. They have an opportunity of presenting their views not only by the Committee of the Central Legislature but also by the Committee appointed by themselves, a non-official committee of elected men, unofficial in every respect for the purpose of arriving at the conclusion they wish to put before the Commission and there they may be quite certain they will get an excellent and dispassionate hearing.

I cannot myself think a better Chairman could be found for the purpose or one who would satisfy Indian public opinion more thoroughly than Sir John Simon who is going out to undertake this very responsible duty.

#### Hopeful of a Change.

I am oppressed by some apprehension lest Indian politicians may be led away into carrying out this policy of the boycott or refraining from presenting themselves and refusing to have, in the language of one telegram to me, anything to do with the Commission in any shape or form. I know Indian gentleman, indeed an Indian he was going to say of every class is very sensitive. He is perhaps none the less sensitive because he is ruled by a Government which is not his own and is prone to take offence where none is meant.

He is, because of these very facts, rather inclined to think there is some desire to wound him, to place him in a position of inferiority. When he has read what the Secretary of State has had to say to-day I believe in his heart he will find he has been mistaken. Although it is very difficult for a politician in India as in England to recede from a position which he has once publicly announced, yet I am hopeful there will be a change and that it will be recognised that everything that could be done for them has in fact been done in this connection.

I would only add, in conclusion, that some of my Indian friends, if they look back on the events of the last few years and even beyond, will find that the policy of abstaining from any intercourse with the Commission or with the Government has not always been productive of benefit to India and it is rather a perilous instrument to use and sometimes it recoils upon those who adopt it. If the policy is persisted in, I do not hesitate to say that a grave error will have been committed.

#### India's "Opportunity."

An opportunity is presented to India to put the whole of her case before a tribunal presided over by a Chairman of the character and capacity of Sir John Simon. But the whole purpose of it is that the gentlemen forming the

Commission should inform themselves, educate themselves to speak, when they are in India, on the views of Indians, that they shall learn everything that there is to be said on the subject, that they shall duly and faithfully report to Parliament when they return, and that they shall give their conclusions which at least we may be assured are not conclusions of those who reason *a priori* but will be decisions arrived at by them after carefully weighing and sifting all the evidence that is presented to them.

#### Diarchy.

Regarding the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, I have expressed the opinion before in the Lords and also in India that they have proved on the whole to have been better devised even perhaps than those who had the leading part in them themselves thought at the time. I am not for a moment suggesting that they are incapable of amendment but I believe that in them is the foundation well laid and that it rests with India now to show to the British public that from the experience she has had, from the knowledge she has acquired of Parliamentary Government from all various events during these eventful years—after all the Legislatures have only existed since the beginning of 1921—she is now able to present a case and arguments which will enable the Commission to form its own opinion and report to Parliament when Parliament will again have an opportunity of hearing the Indian Committee. If they desire to make representations in those circumstances they have really the best protection that could be devised for them and it would be very unwise, I venture to think, if they refrained from making every possible use of the opportunities afforded them.

Lord CHELMSFORD said he was deeply committed to the belief that the inquiry should be through the medium of a Parliamentary Commission. He emphasised that Indians should be closely associated in a very effective way with the working of the Commission and earnestly hoped that Lord Reading's appeal to India would reach them.

He further emphasised that there was no reflection at all upon Indians in the constitution of the Commission and there was no idea of shutting them out from a full expression of their views. He pointed out that Mr. Montagu and he were closely conditioned by the announcement of His Majesty's Government in 1917 and the same condition applied to the Commission.

Reviewing the history of the Reforms in India since his time, Lord Chelmsford expressed the opinion that the ball had been set rolling by the very remarkable speech of Lord Sinha as the President of the Indian National Congress of the Christmas of 1915, pleading to the British Government to declare their policy with regard to the future constitutional development.

#### Origin of "Diarchy."

Lord Chelmsford said that when he returned to England from India in 1916 he found a Committee of the India Office considering the lines of the future constitutional development. The Committee gave him a pamphlet broadly outlining the views which, when he reached India, he showed to his Council and also to Lord Meston and it contained what is now known as the Diarchic principle. Lord Chelmsford explained that the epithet "Diarchy" originated from the remark of Sir William Meyer when he heard the proposal that it reminded him of the division into Central and Imperial



Provinces under the early Roman Empire which Mommsen (1) called "Diarchy."

Lord Chelmsford said that his Council and Lord Meston both reported adversely on the proposals in the pamphlet. Lord Chelmsford then proceeded to consider the despatch on different lines in the nature of an extension of the old Morley-Minto Reforms but Sir Austen Chamberlain, then Secretary of State, pointed out that these proposals failed to fix the enlarged Councils with responsibility.

Lord Chelmsford thought that in that criticism of Sir A. Chamberlain lay the basic principle of the announcement of 1917. It was true that Mr. Montagu was then the mouthpiece of that announcement but it was common knowledge that the announcement had been substantially framed before Mr. Montagu assumed office. When he and Mr. Montagu met in India in November in 1917, they found that both had arrived at substantially the same conclusion, namely, that in order to carry out the announcement, the diarchic method must be employed.

Lord Chelmsford recalled that the Reforms were introduced under unfavourable conditions, namely, the Punjab disturbances, non-co-operation and financial stringency. He hoped his old friend Sir John Simon, would start his Commission under more favourable auspices and expressed delight at Sir John Simon's appointment. He hoped that the report or advice the Commission gave when it reported would square with the announcement in the manner in which Mr. Montagu and he had to square their proposals of 1917. He might have been unfortunate in his attempt to carry out the terms of the announcement but he hoped that the Simon Commission would be more fortunate. He concluded by saying that all quarters hoped that the Commission would be successful in the great enterprise.

Closing the debate, Lord BIRKENHEAD declared, "I do not think it is necessary to add more than a word to the very remarkable debate. Seldom, indeed, can a discussion have been informed by more knowledge. There has been contributory to it a former Secretary of State, who was in office at a very troubled period in the history of India, and two Viceroys, each of whom was charged with special and grave responsibility during the period of his office.

"I am greatly encouraged by the realisation that none of those three has quarrelled with or challenged the broad decision of His Majesty's Government. Is it too much to hope that so remarkable an unanimity—for I exclude minor points upon which some criticism has been expressed—is it too much to hope that so remarkable an unanimity of opinion among men of so vastly different experience and so representative of every political thought in Britain may travel to India? May it so travel and may it have the effect of persuading men of prominence and position in India. They would be rash in prematurely, perhaps irretrievably, committing themselves to a course which perhaps hereafter will prove to be unwise and irreconcilable with their own ultimate interest.

"On this point Lord Olivier has addressed the word of wise caution which I venture to adopt and repeat. I will only add that I am deeply grateful for the spirit which has prevailed during the debate and for the successful contribution which I am persuaded it has made to the difficult situation in which we find ourselves."

*The House agreed to Lord Birkenhead's resolution without opposition.*

## Debate in the House of Commons.

On the 25th November in the House of Commons Earl WINTERTON moved the resolution regarding the appointment of the Indian Statutory Commission.

At the outset, he replied to a question regarding the incidence of the cost of the Commission, put by Col. Wedgwood ten days ago, and said that under the Government of India Act, Indian revenues would bear the cost of the Commission, but His Majesty's Government had decided to contribute £20,000 towards it.

Earl Winterton said that he hoped and believed that Lord Birkenhead's statement in the Lords and the speeches that would be made to-day in the Commons from Treasury Benches would allay apprehension in India as far as those apprehensions were based on honest doubt regarding procedure, although H. E. the Viceroy's announcement contained a full and generous recognition of India's legitimate claim.

He considered that it was necessary to grasp and appreciate two conceptions, if any common ground was to be reached between His Majesty's Government and their critics, although it was not easy to divide those two principles.

First of those principles was that "upon Parliament lies the responsibility and ultimate decision,—a responsibility which cannot be shared with or handed over, to any other authority."

The second was that "the composition of the Commission and every detail of method contemplated in connection with the enquiry, indeed the whole statement made by Mr. Baldwin in the Commons on 8th November and by Lord Birkenhead in the Lords, form an integral whole which stand or fall together."

Earl Winterton recalled that the Act of 1919 was passed with the assent of all parties. At that time there were Indians who repudiated the Preamble of the Act and denied the right of Parliament to determine the Indian Constitution. Advocates of this view-point demanded and still demand that responsibility for peace and good government and moral and material progress, which has been directly assumed by the Crown, should be abruptly discredited but that was an untenable conception to-day for those who accepted the Act of 1919.

Parliament, whether right or wrong, could not throw off responsibility at this stage. There was much of falsified history in connection with the situation that Britain found when she first went to India and assumed responsibility for the present and for the future of the Indian people, especially as the trustee of minorities.

Earl Winterton scouted the attempts to compare conditions in India, Ireland and Egypt, since Egypt and Southern Ireland were far more homogeneous than that great sub-continent of India had ever been.

"If you examine the situation in India, you do not find the Fellaheen of Egypt cringing in awe before others of his countrymen, like the depressed classes in India before the Brahmin or the high-caste Hindu. Theoretically in a country like Egypt, where the predominant religion is Islam, every one is equal before the religious law. Take the case of South Ireland. I do not think I have ever seen in the history of Ireland such bitterness between the Catholics and Protestants as between Hindus and Moslems in Northern India. I do not intend to wound Indian feeling but in a debate of this kind we must face facts in order to come to a reasonable decision."

With regard to the composition of the Commission on which point the Act of 1919 was silent, Earl Winterton drew attention to the fact that leaders of the Opposition in the House of Lords yesterday, including Lord Chelmsford, agreed with Lord Birkenhead that the Parliament of 1919 contemplated such a composition as was laid down in this resolution now moved.

Earl Winterton continued: "Nobody who knows India will suppose that two Indian gentlemen, whatever their position or intellectual attainments, could possibly represent all the political, racial and economic factors in India. They could do no more to put their interests forward than could be done by their numerous fellow-countrymen. They could not do as much to influence the

Commission as the properly accredited representatives of the Indian Legislature who will have every opportunity of presenting and emphasising their case could do.

Earl Winterton continuing said that nobody in this House or in India would be satisfied with one or two Indians. The second proposal for a mixed Commission had more to commend it, although it had been rightly rejected.

#### A Physical Impossibility.

Earl Winterton enumerated a dozen separate interests which had successively demanded the recognition of one or another legislature and expressed the opinion that if only half a dozen of them were selected to form a mixed Commission it would not be easy to find a single representative who would command the confidence of the component parts of each of the six remaining groups. He was convinced that mixed representation of Indians and Europeans, official and unofficial, resident or lately resident in India, would be a physical impossibility.

Earl Winterton said he was more concerned with Lord Chelmsford's agreement with Lord Birkenhead because Lord Chelmsford was the author of the report and the Viceroy at the time. Obviously it was very desirable, and that must at any rate have been in the mind of Parliament at the time the Act was passed, that the Commission should not be unwieldy numerically and that the members, though necessarily differing in their outlook towards the Indian problem arising from a difference in their own political views, should be moved by the same fundamental conception of the duty which the Act of 1919 lays on them. Would a mixed Commission satisfy that consideration?

Earl Winterton next dealt with "the fantastic proposal" of the various newspapers to include on the Commission India experts serving in this country. He asked how they could logically include ex-Viceroy and Governors and exclude Indians and Europeans spending their lives in India. A similar argument applied in the case of the suggestion that Sir. Frederick Whyte should be placed on the Commission.

Dealing with the Commission and its functions, Earl Winterton decided it was absurd to say that the Commission, carefully chosen from both Houses and blessed with a Chairman in the centre of the front rank of Parliament and Law, was not the instrument by which Parliament would be able to discharge its responsibilities. It was perfectly possible to be realist without abating a jot from consideration for or sympathy with the ideals of Indians in public life.

Earl Winterton asked whether Parliament was not to listen to the millions of people outside the electoral system in India by obtaining their views directly through its chosen representatives which members of the Commission would be and also whether Messrs. Walsh and Attlee were less likely to be sympathetic to the Moslem minority or the millions of untouchables than Brahmins or members of the Hindu majority.

Evidence was daily accumulating that a raging, tearing propaganda against the Commission by certain persons, who were always opposed to the Government of India as they were entitled to be, did not present the real views of a very large number of people in India who took interest in these matters.

There seemed to be some misunderstanding about the functions of the Central Legislature and of the Provincial Councils. That must obviously be left to the Commission to settle. We could not tie their hands in advance. It was a novel and unprecedented procedure to which the Commons was asked to concur. It was not desirable to attempt to tie the hands of the Commission or in any way dictate to its distinguished Chairman, but the Committee of the Central Legislature and Provincial Committees would be more than mere witnesses and would be able to prepare the case for further self-Government as it appeared to them.

Never had any part of the Empire prior to receiving partial responsible Government or full dominion status such opportunities of influencing directly the British Parliament. It was not done in the case of Canada and Australia or in the most recent case of Rhodesia.

As regards complaint from outside that India ought to have been consulted in advance whether it would accept this form of constitution or not, Earl

## MR. MACDONALD'S SPEECH

25 NOV. '27]

Winterton pointed out that apart from the fact that responsibility must rest upon His Majesty's Government, we were consulting Indians through the Commission.

"I refuse to believe that they will not take that opportunity that they will not assist freely in the very formidable task of revising and reinforcing the constitution of the Empire within an Empire which India is."

Mr. Ramsay MACDONALD following said that he rose, in the name and on behalf of his colleagues, to support the resolution which had just been moved (cheers), offering at the same time most sincerely some advice which they hoped, if accepted, would make the procedure of the Commission, which they supported, more acceptable to Indian people than it otherwise would be.

He must say he regretted that there had not been more consultation between Government and representative Indians for the purpose of paving the way. In this respect, Government had repeated the mistake they had made in the Geneva Naval Conference. He was sure that had Indian opinion and Indians who had made that opinion as well as those who had voiced it possessed the sympathetic ideas that the Under-Secretary of State had just enunciated, we might have been relieved of the antagonism that had been caused by the Government scheme.

What this House had to do was to recognise quite frankly the widespread suspicion that existed in India and what he hoped the debate would do was to remove at any rate a substantial part of that suspicion. If they could do that and convince some of their friends that they had been rather hasty in passing resolutions then it would be good for India and ourselves.

## Parliamentary vs. Royal Commission.

The first question dealt with by Earl Winterton was a Parliamentary Commission vs. the good old-fashioned Commission. He himself had been a member of a Royal Commission appointed to inquire into Indian affairs and he sat on it for over two years under the presidency of Lord Islington. It was a Commission to inquire into the public services and he saw a good deal behind the scenes and took some active part in the negotiations which had to be undertaken in order to get the report of that Commission anything like unanimous.

He felt bound to confess that his experience of that Commission convinced him that a Royal Commission appointed, as that Commission was appointed, to inquire into the Indian Constitution would not be an efficient body. If there was nothing else to be done we would have to appoint one but it was the duty of the Government to consider whether a better system of finding what Indian needs and Indian opinion were could be instituted.

One of the great difficulties of having a mixed Commission, as a Royal Commission, was first of all the difficulty of selection. So far as his party were concerned they had never approached the problem relating to a constitution of a country, they had never criticised the action of the Government of a country, without keeping in their minds in a most prominent and important position the question of the minorities, how the minorities were dealt with, what the relations between the majorities and the minorities were, as being a fundamental essential to the good government of a country.

Therefore it would be absolutely impossible for them to support any Commission or enquiry selected in any way, conceivable unless they had assurances that upon that Commission or enquiry the needs of the minority would be adequately secured.

There was another consideration that followed from that. Without in any way suppressing or thwarting opinion, it was desirable that when the enquiry was finished we should have a report that would really help us. What would be the report that we would get from a Royal Commission appointed in the same way as the one of which he was a member? It would be absolutely impossible to get a report. They would get reports. There would be a majority report and a whole series of minority reports. They would also have a series of reports signed, with various paragraphs in them, with asterisks and foot-notes amounting to a very considerable number appended, and then the House instead of getting a guidance for a Joint Parliamentary Committee, which would be set up as the second stage in this enquiry, instead of having some sort of well-gifted and

co-ordinated evidence and guidance, would itself have to regard the various sections as though they were so many witnesses.

The reports of such a Commission would not carry this House beyond being in the position of listening to so many witnesses. He would like the evidence of witnesses to be sifted in such a way, that it could be co-ordinated and got into some sort of a composite scheme that, as far as human intelligence and ingenuity could, would meet the various points of view and present a common photograph. That would not be possible if the House appointed such a Commission as he had mentioned. It would give them a minimum instead of a maximum guidance.

#### Parliament's Responsibility.

It was perfectly true, that when they were in office in 1924 that question was before them. They were never able to produce a scheme, but he could say that as the result of a variety of conversations, consultations and considerations their minds had turned in the direction of using the Parliaments of the two countries as the enquiring bodies. They never went further than that. If there was anything which representative democracy held in high esteem, it was the Parliament of its representatives. Those who believed in democracy and in organised public opinion created for the purpose of making that opinion effective in administration and legislation, must of necessity hold Parliaments as the highest expression of that public opinion in any country.

When they supported the suggestion that Parliament itself, as the representative and custodian of the people of this country in all political and constitutional matters should say to the Parliament of India, "We are going to regard you as the representative of Indian opinion, we are going to recognise you as having an authority, function and position like unto our own in your country and when we want to know what is going to be the Constitution of India in the future, when we want to know what the opinion of political India is, we appoint a Commission. You appoint a similar body and the two Commissions working together in harmonious co-operation with each other are going to report to the House of Commons what the lines of the new Constitution should be", then, instead of insulting public opinion in India, instead of belittling the political intelligence of India, they were doing it the greatest compliment one Parliament could ever do or that one nation could ever do to another, with which it is in political relationship.

Their concern, therefore, was the relative status of the two bodies. That was what it came down to, the relative status of the Commission which they are going to send out to India and the Commission or the Committee in India, by whatever name they might call it, for he was not concerned with baptismal certificates.

#### Status of the Indian Joint Committee.

The only problem they had to solve—and it was one Indian public opinion intended they should solve—was what was to be the relative status, of the two sections of the enquiry that was to be set up. The Prime Minister's statement the other day was a little unfortunate in this respect. A good deal of misunderstanding, and he hoped it would not be misunderstanding after this debate, had arisen in India not owing to the intention of the statement but owing to the form of the statement. When he heard it, he said, "That is a very unfortunate statement if Government mean to give any sort of recognition to people who are very sensitive on points of self-respect." Because the impression conveyed, and he was sorry it was the impression that India had taken up, was that we were appointing a Commission to go to India to meet a Committee appointed by the Indian Legislatures and that the chief work of that Committee was to present a report and hand it in writing to our representatives.

Although no one could resist the constitutional and historical survey of the position made by Earl Winterton, the less it was emphasised the better. What should be emphasised was the one or two sentences in Earl Winterton's statement which emphasised exactly the position that this Parliament had sincerely taken, that there should be no sense of inferiority and no relationship of inferiority imposed upon this Indian Commission, but that one Parliament was honestly and

sincerely desirous of consulting the other Parliament as to what was the best thing for the country.

He was sorry, therefore, that this debate did not take place before now. He was sure that had the Secretary of State made some sort of speech earlier, of a more liberal and more generous character, much of the misunderstanding would have been removed.

#### The Attitude of the Labour Party.

The Secretary of State yesterday made certain references not to the negotiations because they were not negotiations but the consultations which he and some of his colleagues had over this matter. He wished to say candidly and frankly that, although they were in no way responsible for these proposals, he must say that in the course of those conversations and those explorations as to the meaning and intention behind and below the declarations that had been made in this House and elsewhere, he was bound to say that he found in Lord Birkenhead's mind a sincerity of desire to pursue a liberal policy and treat the representatives of the Indian Legislature in a most open, most friendly and most co-operative way. It was absolutely impossible, of course, to devise a formula to ensure that. They had tried their hands at it and they had failed. It was also impossible to produce a programme of association. That also had been tried and they had failed.

There was one or two essential points which, he was sure, if the Indians had an assurance upon, would remove a very large number of objections and a very large part of their suspicions.

#### How the Commission Should Work in India.

First, they (Labour) advised most strongly that if the wording that the Prime Minister had used in making his announcement implied that the relative status between our Commission and the Indian Commission was to be a status that would be established between a Commission and a witness to a Commission that should be removed at once. There must be no idea, and he hoped the Commission would not have a particle of idea in its mind, that the representatives of the Indian Legislatures were simply going to present a written report, to be wished temporarily good-day, to leave our Commission to examine that report, to discuss it among themselves and then to call back Indian representatives to sit at the other side of the table and answer questions that might be put to them for the purpose of illuminating that report. That was not our intention and it ought to be made perfectly clear. The intention was, and if it was not carried out the Commission would not be so successful as he knew it could be if it was properly handled, to go to India, to see at once our colleagues appointed by the Indian Legislature, to get a statement, to exchange views upon it, to negotiate with them, to regard them just as members from this side of the House, who would sit round in a Commission and use their common intelligence and common ideas for the purpose of producing the best report.

There was another point—in the examination of witness. There were certain witnesses and certain classes of witnesses which our Commission must insist upon. Nobody who understood India would deny that that must be. There must be a considerable number of such witnesses and in the examination of those witnesses he strongly urged that the Commission should have the Indian Commission sitting with them, Sir John Simon presiding over the joint sitting of both, and Indian representatives having exactly the same rights and status as the members of our own section.

#### Indian Committee to Report ?

The adoption of the idea of a joint session, wherever it was possible, would he thought, remove a large number of Indian suspicions. Some people had said that the Indian Commission could not make a report itself. Others had said we ought to authorise it to make a report. His position, and, he thought the position of his friends, was the quite sound constitutional position, so far as the House of Commons was concerned, that they could not give the Commission of the Indian Legislature any right to make a report, nor on the other hand could they with

hold from it the right to report. It was not our Commission and we were not responsible for it. It was not responsible to us and therefore what objection was there to letting it be known that as far as the Indian Commission was concerned, it could make a report as it liked and it could refrain from report if it liked. The body from which it owed its origin could deal with that report with exactly the same freedom as we ourselves could deal with our own report. He thought if that position was known, another large rock of suspicion would be removed.

By every statement that we made and more particularly by the forms in which we chose to embody our ideas, we should convey to the Indian people and the Indian Legislature that we were standing for the Commission of inquiry in a spirit of good fellowship and co-operation, in order that it might get the facts and opinions and reflections of the best Indians, so that it might present to us the very best and most useful report that it could produce.

#### England's Duty to India.

Earl Winterton had referred to certain claims that we had made and had said that in dealing with a people for whom we had been responsible in days gone by, we should remember that a time would come for us, as Parliament and as a nation, to say to them, what many had said to their children who had grown up :

"You are going out into the world. I have done my best for you whilst you were under my wings and whilst I was responsible and now you must take the responsibility of the management yourself. God bless you in your future career." We had to make up our minds with regard to our responsibilities and trusteeship for primitive peoples and subject peoples who were under our stewardship. It was said, in this respect, that if we were wise, right and liberal we would say to India "Go and do just as you like yourselves." That was not good. That was not wise. And that was not fulfilling the best service we could do for India and what was more that was not guiding the destinies of a growing world aright. The time was coming when the work of England would be finished and the India, which was then being substituted, would step out as a self-governing party. When that time came the departure must be with full cognisance, full freedom and good-will of this Parliament. Therefore, at this moment, when this new departure was taking place it was not right, it was not the good, moral way, it was not the way that went the furthest for us if we were to throw India out of door. It was for us to say to India "You have got your Parliament such as it is. You have self-government up to a point. We are prepared now, that another stage has arrived and on the threshold of that stage, that you and we should consult together and go on."

He, therefore, urged the Commission in the large area which was left for them to handle, he begged the Government and the Commission in the spirit in which he had tried to address the House, to go out and remove Indian suspicion and get complete co-operation and with that prayer he hoped the whole House would bid the Commission God-speed.

Col. WEDGWOOD laid stress on the fact that the great hopes of Indians before the names of the Commissioners were announced had been built on what the Commission might do, but their hopes of settlement had now ended.

Col. Wedgwood, referring to the Joint Parliamentary Committee, to which the Commission would have to refer, said, the Committee would probably include interesting but extinct dug-outs who would water down the report. It might take many years before all its stages have been concluded. Indians must now be thinking that when legislation was introduced in the Commons for the benefit of Indians, it would not depend on the report of the Commission, but the actual state of affairs in India at the time.

The exclusion of Indians from the Commission was particularly galling. Too long had Indians been charged with having the inferiority complex. It was only by making a self-sacrifice that they could get rid of that complex.

Col. Wedgwood said the abominations of child marriage and husband-worship filled everyone with nausea. All India was tarred with that brush, but all his friends in India had done much to prevent them and the other things denounced in "Mother India."

An open mind on the Commission was a good thing if it was not an empty mind. The Commissioners had shown no sympathy in the past. They were making acquaintance for the first time with a problem that had never interested them before. That was why India found it all the more difficult to accept the Commission as a gift.

Nothing could be more futile than Non-Co-operation but to refuse the favours of foreigners was a different thing. Indians remembered that boycotting of the Milner Commission in Egypt five years ago did not hurt the boycotters.

He was confident that Indians, who boycotted the Simon Commission, had nothing to lose. His only hope of the Commission was that very often good came out of evil.

Col. Wedgwood, in the course of his speech, said that after all one of the great advantages of English Parliament as compared with foreign assemblies was that, however strong public opinion might be in favour of a particular course, they could always find some crank to get up and support an unpopular cause. (Laughter.) Sometimes he proved right but it adds enormously to the reputation of the British Parliament that people who thought that they could not get justice could generally find somebody to put up a case.

Later, Col. Wedgwood said that they must remember that Indians had not forgotten a certain meeting at Downing Street between General Michael Collins and Lord Birkenhead when a Round Table Conference established peace and ended war, although it was not particularly reputable from our viewpoint seeing that it was surrender to force, but it started a new Dominion of the British Empire on self-governing lines.

Mr. THURTLÉ said that he thought that it was of vital importance that the Commission should obtain the co-operation of the Indian people. He felt that Earl Winterton was using the rights of untouchables, Brahmins and Muslims as a screen for the continuance of the British domination. We ought to recognise that we had no moral right to deny India complete freedom even to the extent of being entirely independent, without the slightest sort of connection with the British Empire, if India wished it.

Mr. Pethick LAWRENCE hotly resented this "tone of superiority" for if the Commission enquired into the conduct of the Indian Legislature that meant that the whole spirit was taken out of the business and that it was a sham. If the Commission worked according to the most liberal interpretation of its duty then boycott would be mistaken. If the Commission was a fake then boycotters would be justified.

Mr. SAKLATWALA declared that the Government were insulting and hurting the people of India. The joint conspiracy between Labour and the Government did not detract from the insult. He said the talk of protecting the minorities was bunkum. The whole commission was a face.

Alluding scornfully to Earl Winterton's observations regarding our trusteeship for minorities, Mr. Saklatwala recalled that, twenty-five years ago, he was prevented from entering a white man's club in India for the purpose of conferring with a white doctor regarding the anti-plague measures though afterwards he was allowed to enter by the back entrance and a corner on the basement. Was that untouchability? Could the Commission alter that?

Every Indian politician felt that the Commission going out would deny Indians the right of self-rule. What right had Britain to send a Commission to India to see whether Indians were fit to govern any more than Britain had to send someone to France to enquire whether Frenchmen should rule themselves and whether the British should take care of the minorities in Alsace-Lorraine?

Mr. BALDWIN regarded the Commission as the most effective scheme for constitutional settlement in India. He took the opportunity of assuring Indians that Government earnestly desired that their opinions and the opinion of every man of good-will, Indian or British, should be accessible to the Commission and should be given the fullest weight.

Government did not intend to dictate to the Indian Assembly how they should



conduct their business. If they liked to vary their standing orders or whatever they could do, they were at liberty to do.

As to whether women would be among the expert advisers, they had complete freedom to take the best means they considered possible to attain their end.

Mr. Baldwin said :—I, as every member, of the House must welcome the tone of the debate to-day, and the general acceptance of the proposal which has marked the proceedings of the debate. There have only been two or three voices raised against the proposal. We are all very pleased to see Mr. Saklatvala back in his place. It is quite evident that during his absence, he made no speech against the government of the country he was visiting (meaning Russia) comparable to the one he delivered to-day, or we should most regretfully have been forced to do without his presence. When speaking of liberty, he must have lost for the moment his keen sense of humour. I felt that never had there been an exhibition more patent to the world of the high depth, breadth and strength of British liberty, than the sight of Mr. Saklatvala delivering that speech in the British House of Commons. There is only one word more I want to say about liberty. When I want information about liberty in Russia, I will go to M. Tortskey, not to Mr. Saklatvala.

I must repeat and re-emphasise some things already said. What has been criticised in the Commons has been less the Commission itself than its form, the form in which the Government's intentions were stated. For that, we have been blamed in India, where misunderstanding was greater, and I think genuinely greater. The Viceroy's announcement gave a full statement of the policy embodied in the procedure and it that procedure in that statement, was not reduced into more close and definite terms, the very reason of that was the reason indicated by the Leader of the Opposition, that is, the necessity of leaving the Commission itself as free a hand as possible until they arrived on the spot. Therefore, we are only giving the framework and within that framework, the Commission will be left free. They can pursue as many of the lines of procedure which have been suggested to-day as seem to them on consideration, wise and practical, only providing that such procedure is within the framework, and does not prejudice the ultimate responsibility of this Parliament.

Mr. Saklatwala's amendment.

Mr. Saklatwala moved to amend the resolution so as to make it read "That the House resolves to invite Pandit Motilal Nehru to the Bar of the House to explain Indian sentiments and guide the House as provided in the preamble of the Government of India Act of 1919, before concurring in submission to His Majesty, of the names of persons".

The amendment was negatived without discussion. The motion of Earl Winterton was carried.

## The Statutory Bill in the Commons.

The announcement of the Statutory Commission was made in both the Houses on the 8th November 1927. The second reading of the Statutory Commission Bill was moved in the House of Commons by Earl Winterton on the 22nd November.

In moving the bill Earl Winterton explained the procedure necessary if the names of the Commissioners were to be submitted to the King in the near future. He said, first, the Government of India Act must be amended by the substitution of the words "within ten years" and when Royal assent was received he would table a resolution that the House concurred on submission of names to His Majesty the King.

This would be debated on the 25th November when the Commission's composition and procedure as laid down in the Act, its projected procedure, incidence of expenditure and other kindred matters could be discussed.

Earl Winterton said that on the Bill only a very narrow point was at issue, namely, whether the date should be altered to allow the appointment of the Commission before December 1929. He declared that the announcement of the Commission being appointed "happily met with no opposition". Opposition was directed solely to the composition of the Commission.

He was unaware, until Mr. Saklatvala yesterday put down a motion for rejection of the Bill, that there was any opposition in any quarter of the House.

Earl Winterton pointed out there was no particular magic in the date in the Government of India Act. It was fixed primarily to test the completed labour of three successive Legislative Assemblies. He said if the Commission was appointed the position would be that the third Assembly under the Government of India Act would complete its period of life and terminate sometime in Spring of 1929 namely, when the Commission had probably finished taking evidence but before presumably it had written its report. Thus, he claimed that the Bill although changing the letter, in no way offended the spirit of the Act.

Earl Winterton drawing attention to the recommendation of the Joint Select Committee of both the Houses of Parliament that there should be no material change in the constitution within this period, said that, firstly, this recommendation referred to an earlier recommendation in the Montford Report, that after five years' experience of the Act proposals should be invited for the modification as regards transferred and reserved subjects and secondly, there was not likely to be any change as a result of the alteration of the date of the Bill until well after the ten-year period had passed." It might be contemplated that the Commission would not report until at least well into the summer of 1929 and presumably Parliament could not be asked to deal with any alteration in the Government of India Act until 1930."

#### Labour Leader's Support.

Mr. MacDonald, supporting the second reading, said that the issue raised was very narrow, for unless the Bill was passed the House could not recommend to His Majesty to appoint the Commission.

Mr. MacDonald did not think the original Bill ever intended that it should tie itself down in this matter. The experiment of Reforms was intended to run a sufficient time, before any revision, to enlighten the House as regards their practical working. "If we had that experience for the next twenty years we would not add a particle to our knowledge of their practicability." He expressed the opinion that the Government was very wise in moving the Bill. He pointed out that the opposition in supporting the Bills were in no way tying their hands as regards the debate on the 25th November.

Mr. MacPherson (Liberal) also supported the Bill.

#### Col. Wedgwood's Opposition.

Col. Wedgwood (Labour) said that the Government always seemed to do the worst thing in the worst possible way. The Bill ought to have been introduced 8 months ago. He opined that it would be better not to appoint any Commission until it was known that Indian representatives welcomed it.

#### Rejection Motion.

After Mr. MacDonald had supported the second reading Mr. Saklatvala moved the rejection of the Bill.

He said that responsible Indian circles were bitterly opposed to the Bill. Indians did not desire a Commission for the purpose of justifying the Government of India Act, but wanted a sort of Round Table Conference to clear the air. Mr. Saklatvala urged the appointment of a Commission composed entirely of Indians, to come to Britain to cross-examine the Government, hear British witnesses and advise the House of the position.

The Labourite Mr. Buchanan seconded the motion for rejection.

Miss Wilkinson also opposed the Bill on the ground that an unfortunate atmosphere had been created by the publication of Miss Mayo's book.

Mr. Maxton, Mr. Scrymgeour and Mr. Stephen supported the rejection.

Though at first they challenged a division, they did not persist and the Bill passed the second reading without a division.

Earl Winterton then moved that, in view of taking all stages to-day the Bill be immediately referred to the committee. Commander Kenworthy and Mr. Buchanan protested and eventually the remaining stages were postponed till the next day.

#### The Bill in the Committee Stage.

On the 23rd November in the Committee stage of the Bill, Mr. Saklatvala moved an amendment to clause 1, providing that the Commission be not appointed until the Legislative Assembly in India had agreed to the resolution approving the appointment, and contended that the present procedure was contrary to the spirit of the Act of 1919.

Earl Winterton said that Mr. Saklatvala had made a very serious charge of breach of contract, not only against Government, but involving the leaders of the Labour Party. He quoted the preamble of the 1919 Act to show the falsity of Mr. Saklatvala's charge, and declared that Mr. Saklatvala had absolutely no authority and had been repudiated by every responsible organisation in India, none of which had accepted him as their spokesman. He pointed out that the Assembly in India has passed no less than five resolutions in favour of acceleration of the date, and yet Mr. Saklatvala was proposing that these resolutions should be entirely disregarded. The acceptance of the amendment would be directly contrary to the spirit and letter of the Act of 1919 and the demand constantly made by the Indian Assembly.

The Labourite, Mr. Wallhead, declared that Mr. Saklatvala, when he visited India, was presented nine addresses by cities, which refused officially to welcome the Viceroy.

The Labourites, Messrs. Maxton and Beckett supporting the amendment, protested that Earl Winterton had not treated Mr. Saklatvala courteously.

Col. Wedgwood said that the amendment should have been met in a different spirit. Indians at present intensely resented begging for small doses of freedom. He considered that they should be treated in every way as equal partners. The time for petitioning had ended and the time for consultation had begun. If India was to pay for a Commission their confirmation before it was established should be natural and right.

Mr. Saklatvala declared that Earl Winterton's allegation, that every organisation in India repudiated him, was contrary to truth. He claimed that meetings of hundred and thousands of the people of India approved his

actions. He alleged that the Government had procured from India no representative Princes to talk to the League of Nations on behalf of India.

The Chairman pointed out that it was out of order to criticise heads of friendly Governments in such terms.

After further Labourite speeches, closure was moved by Mr. Hennessey and carried by 265 votes against 137.

Mr. Saklatvala's amendment was negatived without division and the first clause agreed to.

A number of short speeches of an obstructive character were made by Labour back-benchers on clause two, dealing with the title of the Bill, which was finally agreed to.

The Committee stage then concluded without amendment.

### Third Reading Passed.

During the third reading on this day, Mr. Wheatley expressed the opinion that Mr. Saklatvala's amendment was reasonable. The Bill, in its present form, was likely to do more harm than good.

The Labourite, Mr. Tom Shaw, supported the Bill and hoped that it would pass without division.

Earl Winterton expressed appreciation of Mr. Tom Shaw's speech and declared that a division on the Bill was likely to be misunderstood in India.

Mr. Maxton urged that, before proceeding with the resolution, responsible Indian opinion should have been consulted.

Mr. Saklatvala suggested that the Government should telegraph to the Indian Legislative Assembly and get their co-operation. This would only mean a week's delay.

The Labour back-benchers wished to continue the debate, but the motion of Earl Winterton for closure was carried by 267 votes to 120.

The Bill passed the third reading without division.

### Labour Conference with Lord Birkenhead.

On the 15th November a deputation of the Parliamentary Labour Party interviewed Lord Birkenhead on the question of the Statutory Commission.

Before the deputation waited on Lord Birkenhead it had received instructions from the Party Executive, not to press for the inclusion of Indians on the Commission, but to press for assurance of the fullest co-operation and consultation between the Commission and the Committee of the Indian Legislature. The representations of Col. Wedgwood and others, that any concession short of inclusion of Indians on the Commission, would not satisfy Indian opinion, proved futile, and the Party resolved that the Blackpool resolution on Indian reforms would be met by assurances in regard to consultation.

In this connection, the argument of the Parliamentary Labour Party leaders, was that the Blackpool resolution was distinctly of two parts. The first part reaffirmed the right of the Indian people to self-government and self-determination, but it is was policy which Labour in opposition could not impose on the Baldwin Government. The first part of the resolution can therefore become operative only when Labour is in power.

The second part of the Blackpool resolution related to the Statutory Commission, and it was pointed out that it did not in any way pledge the Party to demand the appointment of Indians on the Commission. The second part of the Blackpool resolution referred to ran: "The Conference declares that the Royal Commission to be appointed under the Government of India Act should be so constituted and its methods of doing its work so arranged that it will enjoy the confidence and co-operation of the Indian people." It was contended that this resolution would be completely satisfied if the fullest opportunities of consultation were offered to Indians and the co-operation of those sections of the people who had accepted the Reforms secured.

This interpretation came as a surprise to the Left wing leaders, who were laying emphasis on the first part of the Blackpool resolution. They believed that at the time when the second part of the Blackpool resolution was framed, the authors of its wording must have been in the confidence of the Cabinet, and must have known its decision to appoint a purely Parliamentary Commission, especially as it was freely admitted that the decision was taken and announcements were ready to issue as early as August.

What happened at the interview between Lord Birkenhead and the deputation may be briefly told. His Lordship was informed that the party was bidden to press for the fullest opportunities for co-operation being offered to the Indian Committee.

Lord Birkenhead expressed sympathy with the demand, and said that it was the intention of the Government to ensure the fullest co-operation between the Commission and the Committee, consistent with efficiency. Details of the interview are not available, but it was understood that the following demand was suggested by the Parliamentary Labour Party:—

That (1) the Committee of the Legislature should sit jointly with the Commission, (2) the Committee should be allowed to either take part in the examination of witnesses or suggest questions to the Chairman to be put to witnesses, and that it should have the right to suggest examination of further witnesses or call for other evidence to rebut any evidence tendered before the Commission, (4) the Committee should have the right of access to all papers and even confidential documents, (5) it should have the right to be consulted before the Commission makes recommendations, (6) it should have the right to join in the recommendations if the agreement with the Commission, or if in disagreement record minutes which shall be placed before Parliament, (7) and that when legislation based on the recommendations of the Commission is before the Parliamentary Select Committee, the Indian Committee be placed on an equal footing with the members of the Commission, and be allowed to collaborate with the Select Committee in such a manner as may be determined by the former.

The Deputation stated that this was the minimum which would satisfy the Labour Party in Parliament, and that failing assurances of these facilities to the Indian Committee, the Party may be compelled to withdraw its nominees on the Commission. Lord Birkenhead left matters in a vague state, but the Deputation pressed for a declaration on the floor of the Parliament. (See *ante*).

### The Parliamentary Labour Party's Decision.

On the 24th November the members of the Parliamentary Labour Party held a lively meeting to determine finally the attitude of the party on the Statutory Commission. The members were insistent that the minimum that would justify Labour participation in the Commission, was compliance by Lord Birkenhead with the demands of the Labour Deputation, securing to the Indian Committee equality of status and authority with the Commission.

It was explained that Lord Birkenhead had substantially conceded the demands made by Labour. The question was one of procedure in which the wishes of the members of the Commission and the views of the Government of India had to be given every consideration. In the circumstances, while Lord Birkenhead undertook to secure the Committee the privileges asked for it, he was unable to make categorical statements straightway. On this, the members demanded that a statement be issued embodying the conditions on which Labour members were being allowed to continue on the Commission. After discussion, the party leaders agreed to the issue of a statement.

A careful perusal of the statement showed that Lord Birkenhead had made important reservations. Originally, all that was intended about the Committee of the Central Legislature was that it should send up its views and proposals in writing, and lay them before the Commission for examination in such a manner as the Commission might decide. The Committee was later on to continue in session to be available for any consultation that the Commission might deem necessary. A similar procedure was to be followed in the provinces. From this, it will be seen that the committee was intended to perform no functions, beyond those of tendering statement on behalf of the unofficial members of the legislatures and to be called or not called into consultation, at the option of the Commission. The following official statement was issued by the Party :—

"The Labour Party regrets that the Government, before making its original proposals in connection with the Indian Commission, did not secure the co-operation of representatives of Indian people. In the opinion of the Labour Party the Commission appointed to proceed to India should make it its primary duty from time to time to consult, on equal terms, with the Committee appointed by the Indian Legislature. The Parliamentary Labour Party is further of opinion that there should be joint meetings of the two Commissions for taking evidence (though not to the exclusion of either body taking other evidence by itself) and that, after all the evidence has been heard and enquiries have been made, further consultations between the two Commissions should be held and reports of both Commissions should in due course be presented to the Joint Committee of two Houses of Parliament. The Labour Party has every confidence that its representatives on the Commission will act in the spirit of this stipulation."

After further discussion the Labour Party decided not to withdraw the members of Labour Party on the Commission and they reached complete agreement with regard to the course to be adopted for the debate on the 25th. The members of the meeting showed every sign of satisfaction at the decision.

### Independent Labour Party's Resolution.

A meeting of the National Council of the Independent Labour Party was held on the 19th November when the main subject of discussion was the situation created by the exclusion of Indians from the Statutory Commission. Speeches were made strongly condemning the exclusion of Indians, and deploring the association of Labour representatives with the Commission. It was pointed out, that Labour was giving a legitimate cause to Indian

politicians to doubt the *bona fides* of their professions in regard to India. After an interesting exchange of views Mr. Fenner Brockway moved :—

"The Independent Labour Party strongly protests against the exclusion of Indians from the Statutory Commission appointed to report on the future Government of India. It reaffirms the right of India to self-determination, and urges that the Labour Party should ask the Labour members on the Commission to withdraw unless Indian representatives are placed on a footing of full equality with the British representatives, or such other arrangements are made as are considered satisfactory by representative Indian opinion."

## •Boycott of the Statutory Commission.

### The Leaders' Manifesto.

On the 16th November Mr. M. A. Jinnah issued the following statement to the press :—

I consulted by wire a few prominent leaders in different parts of India with a view to adopt concerted action regarding the announcement of the Statutory Commission. The answers I received made it clear that owing to the provincial fixtures to which they were already committed in their respective provinces, and having regard to distance a meeting at Bombay or any other central place at an early date was not feasible, although they emphasised the necessity of joint concerted action. As the question will soon be taken up by both the Houses of Parliament in England, I thought it was most essential that authoritative opinion of an all-India character should be expressed in time to reach London before the final decisions are taken by His Majesty's Government. I therefore circulated a draft manifesto, with a covering letter, requesting the various prominent leaders to authorise me on or before the 15th instant to include their names as signatories to the manifesto to be issued, if approved of by them.

I am glad to say that I have received so far, the most powerful and influential support from all parts of India, from the foremost leaders of the Indian National Congress, the All-India Muslim League, the All-India Liberal Federation, the Federation of Indian Chambers and the Mill-owners' Association. I have not included the names of leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha as I received a wire from Lala Lajpat Rai dated Lahore, 15th, as follows : "Have wired to Mr. Jayakar, Awaiting his reply" and subsequently a telegram from Mr. Jayakar dated Poona, 16th, which reads : "My party supports boycott, but prefers to issue its own statement. Copy posted to your address." I have not yet received a reply from Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Dr. Moonje.

I have not included the names of the President and President-elect of the Indian National Congress amongst the signatories to the manifesto, for reasons stated in their messages which speak for themselves and which are as follows :—

From Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar and Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, dated Madras, 14th Nov.

"Your manifesto omits self-determination and also, Assembly and Congress demand; concedes the need for an inquiry and proceeds solely on the need for a mixed Commission. Moreover, abstention is made qualified and conditional. The Congress Working Committee's resolutions and the Bengal and Madras manifestoes have adopted unconditional boycott. Regret cannot sign your present draft, Pray reconsider. Let us all stand firm together for simple abstention, each party keeping its reason to itself or stating all the reasons together."

From Dr. M. A. Ansari, Karnal, 15th November : "Agree with the draft joint statement, except the last sentence which should read 'unless a round table conference, in which British and Indian statesmen' would participate as plenipotentiaries, is invited or at least a Commission with a majority of Indians sitting on equal terms is set up, we cannot conscientiously take any part or share in the work of the Commission as at present constituted."

The other leaders of the Congress, who were consulted, adopted the same line. The manifesto and the names of the signatories are as below :—

"We have given the most anxious consideration to the announcement made in the Houses of Parliament and the statement of His Excellency the Viceroy and the appeal of the Premier regarding the constitution and programme of the Statutory Commission. We have come to the deliberate conclusion that the exclusion of Indians from the Commission is fundamentally wrong, and that the proposals about Committees of Legislatures being allowed to submit their views to the Commission, and later to confer with the Joint Parliamentary Committee, are wholly inadequate to meet the requirements of the case. The

underlying principle of the scheme, that Indians are to have no authoritative voice either in the collection of proper materials and evidence or in the taking of decisions by way of recommendations of the Commission to Parliament, is of such a character that India cannot with any self-respect, acquiesce in it. Unless a Commission on which the British and Indian statesmen are invited to sit on equal terms is set up we cannot conscientiously take any part or share in the work of the Commission as at present constituted."

Sir Dinshaw Petit, Sir Ali Imam, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Sir Abdul Rahim, Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Hon'ble Sir Phiroze Sethna, Sir Purushotamdas Thakurdas; Munshi Ishwar Saran, Yakub Hassan, Dewan Bahadur T. Rangachariar, Dr. Annie Besant, K. C. Neogy, Bepin Chandra Pal; Lalji Narainji, R. K. Shanmugham Chetti; M. A. Jinnah, Sir Manmohandas Ramji, Mr. H. Mody, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Raja Gaznafar Ali Khan, Dr. Kitchlew, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, Mahomed Yakub, Sachidananda Sinha and Nawab Ismail Khan.

### The Congress Manifesto.

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, President of the Indian National Congress issued the following statement to the press:—

The time has clearly come for the Indian people as a whole and all the communities and political parties, whatever their differences in the past, to give up once for all the policy of drift and self-deception. The arrangements relating to the Statutory Commission which have been announced by the British Government cannot constitute a blunder on their part unless we immediately unite in a firm policy of boycott and resistance. We cannot listen to the siren voice of the Parliamentary Labour Party that Indian opinion should wait till the debates in Parliament, for we know that the policy announced by the British Government is their well considered policy which will certainly be put through. It is not a hasty pronouncement but it has been the result of several months' cogitation after sounding and organising all that opinion in England that counts as well as all the European opinion in India that counts. In the second place, it is a definite stand that the Government has taken up in defiance of the opinion of all parties in India and of the National Demand made in the Assembly twice by All-Indian parties and by the Indian National Congress. In the third place, the Parliamentary Labour Party' manifesto supports Government's proposals as a whole and ratifies that portion relating to Select Committees of central and provincial legislatures. It merely says that they will endeavour to secure a more direct and more co-operative voice to those Select Committees. The fundamental Indian objections to the Commission, whether from the Congress point of view or from the point of view of other political parties, are not respected by the Parliamentary Labour Party. We know what the Labour Party did when the Montagu Bill was in the House of Commons. They moved amendments and mostly withdrew them and got defeated on a few. We know what the Labour Party did when it was in power and supported a policy of the severest repression and inauguration of lawless laws in Bengal. We also know that this Labour Party, with the exception of the Independent Labour group, takes the same attitude towards India either as regards the grant of Self-Government or as regards other crucial matters as the Conservative Party or as the Liberal Party. It would be a tragedy if any section of Indian opinion placed any faith whatever in the Labour Party or in any other British political party except in that small group of members who are in the Independent Labour Party and who have shown, by their frequent pronouncements and actions, that they are wholly with us. That group, however, unfortunately is a small group and has as yet little influence and controls neither the



great majority of the Labour Party nor influences any other political party in England. After all this disillusionment it would be the height of folly if we continue to have any faith in British opinion or in British political parties. More than ever the great creed of Mahatma Gandhi which the Congress has adopted, namely the creed of self-reliance, must be the only creed of all sections of opinion in India. I would most respectfully and earnestly appeal to all leaders and other friends not to reserve or postpone their opinions and decisions or wait to take action till the Commission actually comes to India. It is a question of life and death for us and it is of the utmost urgency. Education of opinion is an immediate and paramount necessity. And leading men of all parties are called upon by the terrible gravity of the situation to make up their minds at once and to give a lead to the country.

I rejoice greatly at the wonderful unanimity of opinion that this announcement has evoked in India and our leaders have fully realised their responsibility and acted upon the principle that the task of leadership is to mobilise opinion and not to wait upon the future. Immediate action of an unqualified character is indicated as the only fitting reply to the insolent and deliberate challenge which the British Government has hurled in the face of the Indian people and of all patriotic workers. The Government knew that boycott was in the air and they knew the consequences of their pronouncement. It was a challenge, therefore, on their part to the manhood and womanhood of India to boycott the Commission if they dared. They considered themselves to have been successful in defeating the Non-co-operation movement and I have no doubt they decided that they should be able to defeat any boycott movement and if for the second time they could show to the British Public and the world that they could make the Indian people acquiesce in this Commission and make any boycott of it ineffective the grant of full dominion status or responsible government to India might be indefinitely postponed.

The statement of the Government that if we have a strong case we could persuade the Commission and the Joint Select Committee of both the Houses is severe tax upon our credulity. The case for self-government of any country is strong and of India in particular is the strongest. But we have no faith in any commissions of this description. What is the evidence that is necessary and what is the judgment that can be pronounced? The demand in the Legislative Assembly twice made for the grant of full responsible government and for a round table conference or convention to settle amicably between the two peoples the terms of the new constitution for India is there. The demand of the Congress is there. The demand of all political parties and of the country as a whole for Swaraj is there. As the British Government requires us to demonstrate our fitness for Swaraj the evidence of a conclusive character that we can now furnish consists in the completest and most unqualified and effective boycott of this Commission in all its part and aspects. This evidence of our fitness will impress the Commission, the British Government and British opinion and political parties far more than intellectual displays or knowledge of administrative details or skill in devising contradictory proposals. Select Committees will be very useful to the British Government in denying or diminishing Indian claim for Swaraj. The Select Committee of the Central Legislature is to be a Joint Select Committee of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly. The official members and the nomi-

nated members and the European block will take part in the elections and we may well presume that the single transferable vote will be the method adopted. "The Manchester Guardian," rightly says that if the Select Committees submit dissentient reports that fact may be used to damage the Indians' claim for Swaraj. Every one who reflects upon the proposals of the Select Committees either of the central legislature or of the provinces must hold it to be a skilful plan for eliciting discordant views.

The reasons for the boycott are of the most cogent description. Indian people, as the Congress has rightly claimed, are entitled to determine their own constitution either by a Round Table Conference or by a convention parliament. That claim has been definitely negated by the appointment of this Commission. That is the most important reason not only from the Congress point of view but from the point of view, I am certain, of all the Indian political parties which concurred in the two resolutions of the Legislative Assembly of 18th February 1924 and 8th September 1925. That of course is the fundamental objection. The second reason is that we cannot be parties to an enquiry into our fitness for Swaraj or for any measure of responsible Government. Our claim for Swaraj is there and it is only a question of negotiations and settlement between the British Government and the Indian people. The third reason is undoubtedly the affront to Indian self-respect involved in the deliberate exclusion of Indians from the Commission. While the Congress point of view is undoubtedly that any Commission whether mixed or all-British, is open to the two fundamental objections already stated neither Congressmen nor others can ignore the insult offered to Indians generally when they are roundly told that they cannot be regarded as unbiased and competent to present an accurate picture of facts to the Parliament. A majority of really representative and unofficial Indians on the Commission would still be open to the fundamental objections from the Congress point of view but would be free from insulting implications. Nor do I understand how select committees consisting of Indians will become straightway unbiased and competent to make their judgment "an integral factor in the examination of the question and be given due weight." The fourth reason for the boycott is that the present time is considered by the British Government as most suitable. From their point of view it would help them to revise the constitution so as to make it even more convenient than the existing Act. When a Commission was wanted the British Government would not give it, but they would impose upon the Indian people a Commission which is not wanted and when it is not wanted, Lord Birkenhead now introduces a bill to amend Section 84-A of the Government of India Act so as to appoint the Commission before the expiry of the ten years. Could he not introduce a bill either to repeal that section altogether or to amend it so as to provide for a Round Table Conference or a constituent Assembly. The Government of India Act has been modified during the interval, on matters such as the Lee Commission proposals and the enabling of Viceroys and members of Government to take leave and go out of India temporarily. This very Section 14-A dealing with this Statutory Commission is now sought to be modified on this important matter, the question of date. We are also told in the statement issued by His Excellency the Viceroy that the statute never professed to incorporate "irrevocable decisions." Why then should not Section 84-A be replaced or suitably modified so as to accede to the demands of the

Assembly which were passed by overwhelming majorities and the demand of the Congress and the country as a whole. The last reason for the boycott is the spirit which lies behind these proposals. There is no change of heart except in the direction of greater hardening. I say it with all respect to the British people and with perfect goodwill. "Do you mean business? Do you want a frank settlement or do you proceed by dilatory methods or by uncompromising opposition to Indian aspirations? I must say every autocratic Government in the history of the world that opposes the popular will and aspirations can emulate the reflections of Marcus Aurelius or indulge in the whole literature of ethics and fine sentiment. Friendship between the Indian people and the English people can be founded either upon business or on common social lines. We shall continue to have goodwill and friendship in all matters that do not affect our demand for Swaraj or wound our national self-respect and I am certain that the British people and the Government will appreciate the spirit that lies behind our boycott as the spirit that makes for freedom and national self-realisation and therefore, for future friendship. I would, therefore, appeal to all political parties, to all leaders and workers and to all Indians as well as to those who are pledged to carry out the Congress plan of self-reliance and self-determination to straightway agree to a comprehensive boycott of the Commission. We must not give evidence, written or oral. We must not vote for the Select Committees nor serve upon them. We must not give or attend parties to meet or honour the Commission. The Legislatures, Central and Provincial, should move and pass resolutions expressing want of confidence in the Commission and their resentment at the supreme affront to the Indian nation and reiterating national demands already made. It would be perhaps a good plan if, after moving and passing such resolutions, we stayed away from the Assembly and the councils while not playing into the hands of the Government by resigning or forfeiting our seats. This was my proposal at Gaya which was rejected at that time, perhaps rightly. I appeal to the country to consider this suggestion once more for this time we have the added experience of years and progressive disillusion culminating in this debacle. The country must be educated by calling upon the members of the legislatures and their constituencies to agree to the boycott. This boycott must be kept up till the British Government agrees to a settlement or till the next general elections whichever may be earlier. The Indian Ministers in all the provinces should resign their office in protest. If, as I hope, they are as anxious for Swaraj as others, even before they are asked by their parties and by the country to resign, they would be doing not only the greatest service to the country and to the cause of Swaraj and national self-respect but also to their own political parties and methods if they resign at this juncture and on this issue.

Concurrently with this boycott, we should proceed to frame our Swaraj constitution in the Congress and if need be a convention parliament or a constituent Assembly composed of all the elected members of all the legislatures and the leaders and representatives of various political parties and communities. The British and the Indian Governments and the British political parties and Parliament can, if they chose, take note of these demands. We are going to be choosers of our own fate not beggars."

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# The Y. M. C. A. & Politics.

In our previous issue we have given the proceeding of the European Association which at the annual general meeting held on the 18th February last made certain allegations, especially disapproving the part taken in politics in India by the Y. M. C. A. Secretaries. Accordingly, the Pearson-Mitter Committee undertook a general enquiry into the so-called allegations and the verdict was clearly in favour of the Y. M. C. A. The principal charges were :—

(a) The paid servants of the Y. M. C. A. sell their time to promoters of anti-British political movements. (b) Literature distributed by the Y. M. C. A. in Mesopotamia caused unpleasant incidents. (c) Articles violently anti-British and eulogistic of Russian revolutionaries were published in the "Youngmen of India." (d) Lectures appear in the Y. M. C. A. with a mission to arouse suspicion and work up bitter hatred to everything English.

The allegations classified number 17 and many of them were thrown away as having no foundation. The report distinctly says that there is no truth in the allegations marked (a) and (b). The reports, of course, goes to state that few political articles appeared in the "Youngmen of India" but the authorities of the Y. M. C. A. have already assured the readers that no such political articles would appear in future. As regards the lectures of an "undesirable nature," the report admits that there are very few cases of political lectures being delivered from the Y. M. C. A. platforms but such an 'abuse' is not of serious complexion as the Y. M. C. A. do insist on their standard which is non-political. A searching analysis of the report shows that the Y. M. C. A. stands vindicated and the allegations are not supported by substantial evidence.

The Committee was composed of the Hon. Mr. Justice Pearson of the Calcutta High Court and Mr. B. L. Mitter, Advocate-General, Bengal. They issued the following report :—

## Text of the Report.

This enquiry has been held at the request of the National Council of Y. M. C. A.'s as the result of a resolution which was passed by a majority at the annual general meeting of the European Association held in the Grand Hotel on the 18th of February, 1927. The resolution is as follows :—

"The European Association in India views with the gravest disapproval the part taken in politics in India by the Secretaries employed by the Young Men's Christian Association, and urges the English National Council immediately to take steps to recall British Secretaries who persist in taking an active part in political work, and in future to ensure that any men sent from England shall be pledged to religious, physical, educational and recreational work, also that they shall be pledged not to engage in political work of any kind, nor permit political propaganda to be carried on in their halls, or to assist those who tour India with political missions."

## "Actual Allegations" Classified.

We were unable to undertake a general enquiry and accordingly stipulated that it should be limited and restricted to the actual allegations that

were made in the speeches proceeding the passing of the resolution. Consequently the form that we were able to accept for the reference was as follows :—

To examine the allegations made against the Y. M. C. A. and its officials at a meeting of the European Association held on the 18th of February, 1927, and to state how far such allegations are supplied by substantial evidence.

The points or headings were enumerated as follows :—

(1) The paid servants of the Y. M. C. A. sell their time to promoters of Anti-British political Movements.

(2) Literature distributed by the Y. M. C. A. in Mesopotamia caused unpleasant incidents.

(3) The Convention of 1893 declared an intention of the Indian Y. M. C. A. to take up politics.

(4) Articles violently Anti-British and eulogistic of Russian revolutionaries were published in the "Young Men of India."

(5) When the Princes came to India in 1921 Police reported the Branch in College Street to be a nest of stone-throwers.

(6) Lecturers appear in the Y. M. C. A. with a mission to arouse suspicion and work up bitter hatred to everything English.

(7) Lord Rawlinson threatened to place Y. M. C. A. out of bounds if the new clause in the constitution introducing political propaganda was not withdrawn.

(8) Sir William Vincent stated that if the Y. M. C. A. continued its political propaganda the Government of India would proscribe the Institution as an organisation with which Government servants could have no connection.

(9) Dr. G. S. Eddy repeated in the Y. M. C. A. the Anti-British speech which he had delivered in the Rotary Club.

(10) Drs. G. S. Eddy and Saunders were Secretaries of the Y. M. C. A. (Dec. 1925—Jan. 1926) and they concealed it.

(11) American money is running the Calcutta Y. M. C. A.

(12) The Y. M. C. A. Boy Scouts are not allowed to sing "God Save the King."

(13) Sir Arthur Yapp came to India (17th June 1925) to make enquiries about Red Propaganda of the Y. M. C. A.

(14) Mr. F. E. James is a part-author of a volume on Mahatma Gandhi.

The Scope of the enquiry was enlarged shortly after by the addition of three further headings which are as follows :—

(a) The existence, nature and objects of the part taken in politics in India by Secretaries employed by the Y. M. C. A.

(b) Has any Y. M. C. A. Secretary permitted political propaganda to be carried on in Y. M. C. A. Halls?

(c) Has the Y. M. C. A. or any of its Secretaries assisted those who tour India with political missions, and in what way?

In dealing with these various matters it will not be possible always to treat each one separately, and in some cases they have been treated of together.

At the enquiry, the Council of the Y. M. C. A. and of the European Association were represented: Mr. H. Hobbs also furnished us with a considerable amount of material, consisting mainly of press articles and correspondence spreading over several years.

## Unfounded Charges.

(1) The paid servants of the Y. M. C. A. sell their time to promoters of Anti-British political Movements.

There is no evidence in support of this allegation, and it cannot be sustained.

(2) Literature distributed by the Y. M. C. A. in Mesopotamia caused unpleasant incidents,

This is based entirely on hearsay or rumours as to which no particulars are forthcoming, and the allegations has not been established. On the other hand, the services rendered by the Y. M. C. A. to the troops in Mesopotamia are well-known to all, and their appreciation by the highest military authorities has been shown to us from letters in 1916, 1917, and 1920.

(3) The convention of 1920 declared an intention of the Indian Y. M. C. A. to take up politics.

(7) Lord Rawlinson threatened to place the Y. M. C. A. out of bounds if the new clause in the Constitution introducing political propaganda was not withdrawn.

(8) Sir William Vincent stated that if the Y. M. C. A. continued its political propaganda the Government of India would proscribe the Institution as an organisation with which Government servants could have no connection.

Every three years it appears that a Convention of all the affiliated Y. M. C. A.'s is summoned, which is not a conference of officers but of representatives of local Associations. They meet together mainly to review the work of the previous three years as also to lay down the policy for the three years following. This Convention did not meet for nearly ten years on account of the War. It met at Calcutta in November 1920, and the following resolution was passed :—

III. "The Convention agrees that the Association should ally itself in no sense with party politics. In view of the new era of political development into which India has entered, the Convention is of opinion that the Association in India has a great opportunity for stimulating the growth of high ideals of citizenship and of promoting the study of public questions in an atmosphere of good-will and mutual understanding. It believes that the Association should exert its influence in every Christian way possible towards the complete application of the teaching of Jesus Christ to commercial, industrial, political and social questions, and should stand for Justice and fair play in both public and private life."

The use of the word "political" in the context of the above resolution resulted in a considerable correspondence with Army Headquarters in India during 1921-1922. The suggestion was made that the National Council should withdraw the resolution. The Y. M. C. A. replied that as the resolution was passed by the Convention, they could not change it, but the next Convention might do so. In the meantime, the amendment suggested by the Commander-in-Chief to the Resolution of the Convention in November 1920 quoted above, was as follows :

"The Convention agrees that the Association should ally itself in no sense with party politics, and discussions on political questions or questions which are likely to assume political aspect, should be rigidly excluded.

It believes that the Association should exert its influence in every Christian way possible towards the complete application of the teaching of Jesus Christ to commercial, industrial, and social questions, and should stand for justice and fair play in both public and private life."

The upshot of this was that by Resolution No. 35 of the National Council of Y. M. C. A.'s dated the 15th of April, 1922, after reading the correspondence with the Adjutant-General, ending 1st of April, 1922, it was :—

"Resolved to forward to all local Associations the text of the amendment proposed by H. E. the Commander-in-Chief to Resolution III of the National Convention in 1920 with the information that the Executive Committee has agreed to place the matter on the agenda of the next Convention and to draw their attention to the fact that the resolution of the Convention definitely prohibits every Association from allying itself in any sense with party politics; at the same time the Adjutant-General should be informed that as a matter of fact no Association to the knowledge of the Council is identified or is taking part with any political party.

(b) Resolved that the entire correspondence with the Adjutant-General be supplied to the local Associations after the Commander-in-Chief's decision has been made."

This was followed by a resolution (No. XI) of the Eleventh National Convention held at Bangalore in December, 1923, which is as follows :—

"The Convention considered the question of reconsidering Resolution III on Programme, passed by the Tenth National Convention (1920) The Convention considers that it was one of the resolutions arising from the report of the Committee on Programme of Work for 1920-23, and accordingly is not of further application unless reaffirmed by this Convention.

As regards the whole question of education in citizenship, the application of the teaching of Jesus Christ to the problems being one of the aims of the Association the Convention resolves,

1. That the teaching of civics should form a much greater part of the activity of the local Associations in the National Union than has been hitherto realised; and that each Association should endeavour, by classes, debates, lectures, discussions, social surveys, etc., etc., to inculcate in all its members a desire to study the development of the community in the family, in the village, the city, the province, the Empire, and groups of nations, special attention being given to the study and survey of village and town organizations.

2. That the practice of citizenship should be encouraged in every Association by the development of responsibility in committees, community service, dramatic, social and athletic clubs, night schools, sanitary squads, ambulance divisions, etc. etc., and that each Association should strive to become a centre of community life, where self-government, self-direction and responsibility to one's neighbours are taught."

At or about the same time as the correspondence above mentioned with the Army Head-quarters, further discussions of the same nature took place with Sir William Vincent.

#### Contributions to Young men of India.

(4) Articles violently Anti-British and eulogistic of Russian revolutionaries were published in the Young Men of India.

Upon this allegation what Dr. Datta says is this :—First of all that the articles in question were not Anti-British, also that there is no foundation for the statement regarding the publication of articles eulogising Russian revolutionaries. He adds that as far as he knows, the attitude of the Government authorities was the result of certain articles, to be more precise, four in number during a period of several years.

"The Young Men of India," he says, "as conducted by us, usually contains four to five articles every month dealing with various matters. Any reasonable person, looking over the offending articles, will recognise in the first place that they were extremely small in number, in the second place that they were not Anti-British, and in the third place that they were written by contributors who were feeling deeply and keenly the tragedy of the situation as reflected in 1921 and 1922. On the other hand, the moment these articles were pointed out to the Executive, a statement was issued regarding the attitude of the Association as a whole towards them. It was felt that they transgressed the resolution of the Convention which laid down that all discussions of matters of public import should be carried on in an atmosphere of mutual trust and goodwill. On the whole it was held that these articles might have the effect of causing mistrust and bad feeling, and

the Executive took certain practical steps including the appointment of a committee to scrutinise articles contributed to the Young Men of India, in case they were controversial in tone. Since then, no complaint has come to us regarding our magazine."

We have seen the circular referred to following upon the complaints with regard to these articles, and the latter part of the circular is as follows :—

"With regard to the particular articles complained of, the National Council is in no sense responsible for the view expressed, the writers of the articles being alone responsible for the views contained therein, as is stated in each issue. These so-called political articles have been very few in number, and have formed an infinitesimal part of the material placed before the readers of Youngmen of India. They have not been published, in any sense by way of propaganda of the views therein expressed but solely with the desire of presenting to readers of the paper all points of view, in the hope that a better understanding might thereby be promoted. The Executive Committee feel, however, in light of complaints that have been made, that the publication of such articles leads to misunderstanding, and they have determined, therefore, to ensure that in future articles which are likely to cause such misunderstanding or offence do not appear. They have decided to appoint a small committee, to whose decision the Editor shall refer before publication any article which may be regarded as controversial. The members of this Committee are the Chairman of the National Council Executive Committee, the Hon'ble Mr. Justice W. E. Greaves, Mr. W. L. Carey, M.L.C. and Mr. H. W. Bryant and Rev. W. Paton, of the Council's National staff."

#### "Nest of Stone Throwers."

(5) When the Prince came to India in 1921, Police reported the branch in College Street to be a nest of stone-throwers.

As regards this, we have the statement of Mr. C. S. Paterson, the Secretary of the College Street Branch, that no such incident ever took place although there was some objectionable talk from one or more of the students or their friends to the Police. We have referred to the police authorities and they confirm Mr. Paterson's statement as being correct.

(6) Lecturers appear in the Y. M. C. A. with a mission to arouse suspicion and work up bitter hatred to everything British.

(9) Dr. G. S. Eddy repeated in the Y. M. C. A. the Anti-British speech which he had delivered in the Rotary Club.

(10) Drs. G. S. Eddy and Saunders were Secretaries of the Y. M. C. A. (Dec. 1925-1926) and they concealed it.

Regarding the particular case of Dr. G. S. Eddy, our information is that he left India before the War, and has not since been on the staff of the Indian Y. M. C. A. although he is an unpaid official of the American Association. He visited India for about a month early in 1923. The Y. M. C. A. authorities say that they had no connection whatever with any speech he might have delivered in the Rotary Club. If he did speak at some of the Associations during his visit there is no record of what he said; but at any rate no protest was received either by the National Council or by the local Committees of Management.

As regards Dr. Saunders he has resigned since 1919. His name has been kept on the list of the Literary Secretaries in India, as although out of the country he is interested in the production of certain books on Buddhism of which he himself has been the Professor in an American University since 1919.

#### "Undesirable Lectures."

The broader question really arising upon these and the additional issues is as to whether lectures of an undesirable nature have been given from the



Y. M. C. A. platform, and whether the hospitality of the Y. M. C. A. Hostels has been accorded for the residence of visitors to India whose activities are undesirable, or whose views are extremist in political and social matters. As regards the lectures, it must be remembered that a very large number of them, we believe the figure is over 4,000, are delivered every year in the Y. M. C. A. Halls all over India. Some checks apparently kept over the lecturer and the subject matter of his lecture in so far that the subject has to be passed by the Committee or Board which control the local Y. M. C. A. generally including leading Europeans and Indians of the locality. On the other hand, we have been furnished by Mr. Hobbs with a large number of press extracts extending over the last few years bearing upon the present question, as indeed upon the other matters which were discussed in his speech. It is admitted that in certain cases, mistakes though very few in number, have occurred and that lectures have been delivered from the Y. M. C. A. platforms to which objection can be and has been taken, just as in a very few cases certain persons of very extreme views have been accommodated in the Y. M. C. A. Hostels. One particular case was that of a certain Professor whose lectures were of the objectionable type. He came out to India recommended by the National Christian Council and was himself a Theological Professor. In such a case there would undoubtedly be every excuse for not anticipating the objectionable character of the lectures, particularly if the title is innocuous.

One instance has been placed before us of the case of the Y. M. C. A. Hall at Lahore having been the scene of a lecture of such an undesirable character. On this particular occasion the meeting was not one of the Y. M. C. A., itself, but the Hall had been lent to the Tilak School of Politics. Permission had previously been given to them to use this Hall on the occasion of purely literary lecture by Mr. Aldous Huxley, and the subsequent loan of the Hall on the particular occasion objected to, was thought to be for an unobjectionable subject. As a matter of fact after the lecture the General Secretary of the Y. M. C. A. at Lahore wrote to the Y. M. C. A. authorities (we have seen the letter) explaining the objectionable character of the lecture, and how it was that the Hall had come to be lent on that occasion. We are informed that since that time, and on account of what happened, the Lahore Association has refused to lend its Hall to the Society.

It is not for us to assume to lay down where the dividing line should come between what may be deemed to be objectionable and what not. From the evidence that has been put before us we are of opinion that a more efficient control might be exercised by the Y. M. C. A. authorities, local or central, over the lecturers themselves and the lectures delivered in the Y. M. C. A. Halls. We have had a number of abstracts put before us covering a very large number of subjects for lectures delivered in the Y. M. C. A. during the last few years in different parts of India. The subjects are certainly not objectionable and are such as one might expect to be delivered or discussed in Y. M. C. A. Halls. It is all the more important that the standard should be maintained, and that anything which is or may be regarded as of an undesirable nature, should be rigidly excluded.

It is, however, not to be expected that previous enquiries in every case can be satisfactorily made. One recent case has been put before us when as a result of information received a certain person was refused hospitality of the Y. M. C. A. Hostels. Cases such as that already referred to of a lecturer

coming out with the highest recommendations cannot be helped. There is nothing to put the authorities on their guard, and no blame can be reasonably attached to them in the first instance. But even in such a case the first lecture, in which objectionable matter was introduced (as admittedly happened in one case) ought to act as a danger signal and steps should then be taken to prevent the recurrence of such a speech; such a man should not be permitted to continue on his tour of lectures whether actually under the aegis of the Y. M. C. A. or merely being allowed the hospitality of their Halls. The name of the Y. M. C. A. in connection with such lectures gives a character and authority to the lecturer, which he would not possess to the same extent if he were not speaking under its aegis or from its platforms. The same may be said of visitors who are given the hospitality of the Y. M. C. A. Hostel. From this point of view, it is, therefore, all the more important that the Y. M. C. A. should constantly be most careful to guard against an abuse of its hospitality, and to see that its hospitality is not extended to undeserving persons.

(11) American Money is Running the Calcutta Y. M. C. A.

It appears that the American Association in the past and previous to the War for a period of twenty years made certain building grants to the Calcutta Association, in addition it has maintained on the staff of the Calcutta Association from two to four Secretaries. The present number is three, of whom two are Canadians and one American. Certain capital grants towards buildings are made by America and Canada in regard to some of the branches throughout India. Contributions are also made to the National Council towards the total expenses. The policy is now adopted that this should be gradually reduced until it is extinguished. No cash grants are made to any local Associations.

(12) The Y. M. C. A. Boy Scouts are not allowed to sing "God Save the King."

There has been no evidence in support of the statement, and it has not been established. The Scout authorities of Madras, Travancore, Burma, Central Provinces and the Punjab, in which places connection between the Y. M. C. A. and the Boy Scouts exists, all state that the allegations are without foundation.

(13) Sir Arthur Yapp came to India (17-3-1926) to make enquiries about Red Propaganda of the Y. M. C. A.

This statement is not supported by the facts. It appears that Sir Arthur Yapp came out to Malaya taking India on his way and spent altogether less than seventeen days in India and Burma. We have seen a telegram from himself in which this allegation as to the reasons of his visit to India is denied.

(14) F. E. James is a part-author of a volume on Mahatma Gandhi.

The facts are as follows :—

It appears that in 1923 or 1924 Mr. F. E. James was asked to write a preface to a small brochure on Mahatma Gandhi by Principal Bridge of C. M. S. College, Calcutta. He read the M.S. and wrote a short "Foreward" about a page in length. This was included in a book called "Mahatma Gandhi. The World Significance" and Mr. James' name appears on the title page as a part author. The book contains a considerable amount of matter by other people. The "Foreward" in question was put in the middle of the book and tacked on to a lot of other matter which looks as though

Mr. James has written all that section instead of only the short paragraph that he did write. Mr. James wrote to the publishers pointing this out as an entire breach of trust and asking that his name and "Foreward" be omitted from any future edition. Mr. James also wrote to the Secretary, European Association, in September 1925 explaining what the facts were.

#### Additional Issue.

(a) The existence, nature and objects of the part taken in politics in India by the Secretaries employed by the Y. M. C. A.

The paid officials of the Y. M. C. A. in India are 117 in number. Of these there are only three of whom it may be said that they have taken part in politics. In 1925 there were three, 1926 two, and 1927 one. Mr. J. R. Isaac, General Secretary of the Bangalore Association, was nominated by His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore to represent the Indian Christian community in the Mysore Legislative Assembly. He served for three years until September 1925, when he resigned owing to his transfer.

Dr. S. K. Datta was nominated by the Governor-General to represent the Indian Christian community in the Legislative Assembly and served from 1924 to 1926.

Thirdly, Mr. F. E. James was elected in the Spring of 1924 to represent the Presidency and Burdwan European constituency in the Bengal Legislative Council. He served until the dissolution of the Council in 1926, was re-elected unopposed in November 1926, and is still a member of the local legislature.

Besides the above, Dr. Datta was appointed by the Secretary of State for India to serve as a member of the Indian Student Enquiry Committee under the chairmanship of the Earl of Lytton in 1921-22. Mr. F. E. James was appointed by the Bengal Government to be a member of the advisory Committee on Emigration for the Port of Calcutta. Mr. E. P. Hillier was nominated by the Bengal Government a member of the Calcutta Corporation to represent the Anglo-Indian community. He served for a year (1924-25).

It is stated that it is possible that some of the other members of the Y. M. C. A. staff, particularly the Rural Secretaries, may have been nominated to the District Boards. The Secretary in Ootacamund was nominated a member of the Municipality of that town to represent Indian Christians. Mr. J. W. Stanley was Member for one year of the Municipality of Allahabad in 1922-23. Mr. W. Hindle was appointed by the Madras Government a jail visitor of the Madras Penitentiary as also a member of the Committee on Unemployment.

(b) Has any Y. M. C. A. Secretary permitted political propaganda to be carried on in Y. M. C. A. Halls?

(c) Has the Y. M. C. A. or any of its Secretaries assisted those who tour India with political missions, and in what way?

These have already been dealt with under the headings 6, 9 and 10.

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## EIGHTH SESSION OF

# The Trade Union Congress.

The Eighth Session of the Trade Union Congress began its session at Cawnpore on the 26TH NOVEMBER 1927. Among those present were Mr. Mardy Jones M. P., Mr. A. A. Purcell, M. P., Mr. Hallsworth of the British Trade Union Congress, Mr. Spratt, Mr. N. M. Joshi, M.L.A., Mr. Giri, Raj Sahab Chandrika Prasad, Mr. Jhabwala, Mr. C. F. Andrews, Mr. Daud, Mr. Kedarnath, Mr. S. P. Dange, Mr. Kishorilal Ghose, Dr. Viswanath Mukherji and Mr. G. Sethi.

Fraternal greetings were read by Mr. N. M. Joshi, General Secretary, from the Communist Party of Great Britain, the Executive of the International Federation of Trade Union Congresses, Amsterdam and the political secretary of the Independent Labour Party; Mrs. Annie Besant, Mr. H. B. Moreno, Mr. Ginwala, Mr. B. Shiva Rao, Mr. Kanji Dwarakadas, Mr. E. L. Aiyar, and other Indian labour leaders.

### Irish Labour Party's Message.

Among the messages received by the Trade Union Congress, was one from the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress. "While the Irish movement cannot claim" proceeds the message, "that it has been able to keep itself fully informed of the details of the progress of the Trade Union' movement in India, we feel that conditions and history of our respective countries create a natural bond of sympathy and union. Our experience has been that the political situation of the country has in many ways hampered the development of a fully effective trade union organisation, and we have realised firstly that the solution of the political problem is a condition precedent to the solution of labour problems, and secondly that political freedom, of itself, cannot mean true freedom for the workers. We do not doubt that these facts, which might be deduced in theory and have with us been confirmed in practice, will actively present in the minds of the delegates to your Congress. We look forward with hope both to the advancement of India towards political freedom, and to the progress of Indian workers towards social and economic freedom,

### Reception Address.

Mr. Ganesh Shanker Vidyarthi, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in welcoming the delegates observed that though the greatness of the city was due to the labourers, their condition was extremely unsatisfactory. He invited the distinguished visitors to pay a visit to the houses of the labourers which, in Mr. Saklatvala's language, would not in Europe be considered fit even for brutes. Child mortality, due to tuberculosis, was very great. The Municipal Board took little interest in the labourers. Labour representation on the board was nominal. Neither had they any representation in the Provincial Council. The Government had turned a deaf ear to their repeated demands. It had even expressed inability to investigate the extent of unemployment in the province. The demand for better housing conditions for labourers met with the answer that unless a scheme was put forward, nothing could be said. The Improvement Trust also were not sympathetic. The Government, he alleged, was antagonistic to the Labour movement, and its workers were special objects of the attention of the police, and he asserted that the proposed military police in the province, was aimed at the workers' and peasants' organisation.

Dewan Chamanlal, who on rising, was accorded an ovation next delivered his presidential address.

### Presidential Address.

Dewan Chamanlal said if the Trade Union movement were to succeed, India must have a strong central executive spreading out its tentacles into the provinces. They had the example of the British Labour movement before them. The British movement was forced to call a triple alliance against the British Trade unionists.

Sectional Unions, with sectional politics, could never succeed in modern industrial conditions, in view of the fact that capital was marching towards complete synthesis, not only national, but international. In this connection, Dewan Chamanlal advocated the

collection of a large central fund of Rs. 10 lakhs to be controlled by a central executive and to be spent on organisation work. He dealt with the conditions of labour in India and other countries. He next referred to the Kharapur lock-out and then detailed his scheme regarding organisation of the workers and peasants in India. His scheme, Dewan Chamanlal said, was a simple one. The first item in that scheme was the collection of the funds referred to above. The second item was the appointment of tried and trusted organisers. The third item was the division of the country on parallel lines, one division to include industrial areas, and the other division to include agricultural areas. The fourth item on the programme was the division of each area into districts with distinct headquarters, district organisers and a competent staff. District officers must have under them competent propagandists, and there must be linking up of the organisations both agricultural and industrial in their particular areas. The fifth item in the programme was the establishment of a publicity bureau, which must be manned by paid officials under whom there must be a staff of competent linguists, with a central press. From the headquarters of this bureau, must be sent out literature in the shape of posters, handbills and pamphlets, to each district headquarters.

Proceeding, Dewan Chamanlal said that they had an apprenticeship of seven years. It was time the Trade Union Congress in India became an exemplary organisation in the east rivaling and excelling every similar movement in the world. It was useless to make complaints regarding their condition against either the employers or the Government. A complaint had arisen that the Government of India, although they were anxious to help, in their own way Indian industry, when it showed signs of distress, had not realised their responsibility towards the workers. The only lever they could employ was the lever of strong organisation, and it was for that reason that no reliance should be placed upon any outside agency, but on their own inherent strength.

Referring to the coming Statutory Commission, Dewan Chamanlal said that their organisation was not considered important enough to be consulted by His Excellency the Viceroy. But if it had been consulted, it could have returned but the same answer that had been given to the British Government by practically the unanimous voice of India. "We shall have nothing to do with it. Those politicians who believe they can get their freedom as a gift from the Conservative Government" said Dewan Chamanlal "are ignorant of the world factors." To co-operate with the Commission would merely show that they still put a premium upon flunkeydom and human debasement. It was to the credit of the average politician that he had openly indicated his dissociation from the work of Commission. The main work which the Commission was intended to perform was not that of drawing up a self-government scheme, but an Imperial Defence scheme for future military necessities and the finding of markets for British manufactures. "Be it noted" he added, "that the precursors of the Statutory Commission is the Secretary of State for War, and British Labour is to be represented, not by our friends Mr. A. A. Purcell or Mr. George Lansbury, but by two minor Labour war-lords. From this platform, I call upon the British Labour Party to withdraw the two labour members from the Commission. As self-respecting men they should tender their resignation voluntarily. India does not want them, and their own principle should prevent them from acting as the 'common hangmen of a nation' in distress.

Dewan Chamanlal next referred to labour representation in the Councils and demanded adult suffrage. He recommended that the Congress should draw up their representation in the form of a manifesto, and place their case not before the Statutory Commission, but before the world.

Concluding, Dewan Chamanlal paid a tribute to Comrades T. C. Goswami N. M. Joshi, V. V. Giri, H. Jhabwala and others who stood by the workers throughout the year, and also to the British and Russian movements for the assistance they had given, and asked the Congress to send their greetings to the workers in China, Britain and Russia.

### The General Secretary's Report.

The General Secretary's report, as approved by the Executive Council, was then adopted. It stated that two unions already affiliated had withdrawn affiliation on account of the Postal Department's objection. New applications from five unions had been received. No Executive Council meeting could be held during the year, but business was transacted by means of circulars issued to the affiliated unions and to the members of the Executive Council. The report complained that only 33 out of the 58 affiliated unions supplied information to the General Secretary as regards their membership, finances, etc.

As regards the Indian Mines Act at present before the Legislative Assembly, the report complained that the limit of the maximum daily hours of work should have been

fixed so high as 12 hours. The report regretted the postponement of consideration, by the Government of India, of the recommendations and conventions passed at the ninth session of the International Labour Conference. It mentioned the proposed introduction by Mr. N. M. Joshi in the Legislative Assembly of a Bill to free from criminal liability, unregistered trade unions or any group of two or more persons acting in furtherance of a trade dispute. It regretted that efforts at legislation to secure municipal franchises for workers residing in Bombay city should have failed and that the Bombay Legislative Council should not have passed the amendment intended to give representation to workers on the Bombay University Senate. May Day celebrations organised in Bombay and other places were also chronicled as well as the work done by Mr. V. V. Giri and Mr. G. Sathi at the International Labour Conference, and by the latter in the Paris International Trade Union Congress and at the Edinburgh session of the British Trade Union Congress.

## SECOND DAY—27TH NOVEMBER 1927.

### The Kharagpur Lock-out.

The Congress re-assembled on this day in the afternoon. In the beginning Rai Saheb Chandrika Prasad moved: (a). This Congress supports the Central Council of the B. N. Railway Indian Labour Union in the attitude they have taken up in their fight with the railway administration, and offers its whole-hearted co-operation in whatever action they may hereafter take; (b) this Congress emphatically protests against the tone of the communique issued by the Agent of the B. N. Railway on the 23rd November, and considers it positively humiliating and calculated to hamper the progress of negotiations for an honourable settlement.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. B. D. Mistri, and supported by Mr. Daud and Dr. Bishwanath Mukerji, and was passed unanimously.

### Mr. Purcell's Address.

Addressing the Congress Mr. A. A. Purcell, M.P., said:—

On behalf of the British Trade Union Congress, I bring you comradesly fraternal greetings from the trade unions and millions of organised workers of Britain. I can assure you that those organised workers are watching the developments of the trade unions in India with the keenest interest and closest attention and that they wish you the greatest success in your endeavours to improve the position of the workers and to build up a powerful trade union movement in this great Empire of India.

I am well aware of the trials you must undergo, and the difficulties you must meet with in the course of your trade union work. I know that dogged patience, courage and exceptional organising ability are required in the exceptional circumstances under which you must work. I want to tell you that, what you have done and are doing, is greatly appreciated, and is being increasingly appreciated by the active men and women in the British Trade Union movement, and that the presence here of myself and my colleague, Mr. Joseph Hallsworth, is at the express desire of the delegates of the Edinburgh Trade Union Congress, who were anxious that we should give you all the encouragement and assistance that we could.

The workers of Britain desire to effect the closest fraternal relationship with the workers of India, and they have sent us to voice their sympathy with the Indian workers in their struggle, and to establish the closest possible organisational contacts. Within recent years, there has been developing, in the British movement, a deeper knowledge of Indian affairs, and part of our task is to acquire all the information concerning the Indian workers and of Indian trade unionism that we can, so that we can make it known, on our return, that the workers of Britain feel that they have much in common with the workers here. That is the business of our Delegation. It is our duty to do, whatever is possible to link-up to co-ordinate our trade union movement with the British movement. We ought to be one great united movement.

The employing class of Britain is, to a large extent, the employing classes in India. It is regrettable that the older trade union movement of Britain did not appreciate that long ago, and we no doubt would have been much more successful in our negotiations and dealings with the employers, particularly in those industries which ramify into India, such as, the textile and jute industries. Many British firms have industrial undertakings here. British interests exercise a large share of control over Indian iron and steel works and factories, workshops, mines, and so on. British financial interests are tremendously strong here, and the British Government is the organ at this

moment for expressing the will of the employing class, and it exercises imperial dominion over this vast country by a thousand economic and political threads.

The destinies of the workers of Britain are linked together with the destinies of the workers of India. Your trade union movement has to meet and deal very largely with the same factors as the trade union of Britain. To most British workers India is a land of strangeness, mystery and romance. In the elementary schools, where they receive such education as they do receive, and in the newspapers and magazines which they read subsequently, the workers of Great Britain are sadly misinformed as to the real state of affairs in India. In your dealings with the British workers you should make allowance for the kind of mental attitude which is specially engendered by the governing class. It is our desire to dispel some of the illusions about India when we return.

Just as we, in Britain, need and desire full information about the industrial conditions in India and the Indian trade union movement, so I want to urge the leaders of the Indian trade union movement to carefully gather together all information about the trade union movements in Britain, Germany, America, and Russia, particularly and in the world generally. Much valuable knowledge could be obtained even from Mexico and China. The workers of the western world are just beginning to learn something of the working and living conditions of the workers and peasants of India. Those conditions are such as to menace civilization.

A grave and terrible responsibility rests upon you and the Indian trade union movement generally. Here, in India, legislation to enforce even 12 hours shifts as a protective measure in the mines meets with the opposition of the mine-owners. The cotton mills of Lancashire work 32 hours per week. The cotton mills of India work 63 hours a week. In every industry in India, we find the workers working almost twice as long as their fellow-workers in similar industries in Britain and America. We say that the wage the British miner receives is not a living wage. We say, that it is impossible for a miner and his family to properly live on such a wretched rate of pay; indeed it is not possible. But if that is truthfully said about the British miner, what ought to be said about the Indian miner? It is said by the capitalist employers both foreign and native in defence of this frightful exploitation of the native Indian workers, that their working capacity still is far below that of the British and American workers. They tell us that, when India has been famed for its skilled craftsmen for centuries and when many of the arts and crafts known in the world have been derived from India—they tell us that, when their balance-sheets and their profits give the lie direct to the statement that India is rapidly being transformed into a great industrial country.

This modern industrialism must be made to synchronise with modern life, by ensuring that modern conditions are applied to every aspect of life. As workers are being compelled to operate modern machinery so they should be given opportunities of dwelling in modern houses, under sanitary and healthy conditions. Do not let industrial progress carry in its train, all the horrors of capitalism without its economic and social organisation as far as the workers are concerned. At this stage of world progress, these evils can be avoided. It is not inevitable that India should pass through a period such as Britain has passed through during the past century, which has played much havoc with the happiness and well-being of the toiling millions of Great Britain. India is deeply involved in world economy. Indian manufactures are competing for a place in the world markets. Indian textiles are driving the textiles of Lancashire out of the Eastern markets. Indian coal is now being consumed where British coal was consumed formerly. The products of your mills and factories are now to be found in all the principal cities of the world. We must all become aware of world developments. You have made substantial progress in the organisation of railway men, public administrative workers, textile and engineering workers. There is vital necessity to develop organisation among all sections of workers in order to give the correct balance to the movement everywhere.

#### Mr. Hallsworth's Speech.

Mr. Joseph Hallsworth, who has had a great deal to do with international organisation of clerical employees and shop assistants, speaking next, observed:—

Here we represent no particular section of workers. We represent the whole British Trade Union movement, which regards, with special interest, the beginning of the growth of trade unions in this great country. In no country can labour live for itself alone. This is true also of each individual trade union in every country; the success of one leads to the success of another, and *vice versa*. We are all slaves in the slavery of our fellows. Under the national and international organisation of capitalism, aided and buttressed by all the forces of Government, slavery in a greater or less degree is inevitable; and will be so until workers of every type become sufficiently educated and conscious of

their rights and responsibilities, to ensure that industry and services will be democratically owned and controlled.

The growth of trade unionism in our country has been largely coincident with the growth of capitalism itself. The young Indian movement is, however, faced with the experienced and highly organised movement of the employers in the country. Nevertheless, the British trade unions have to learn something of value from Indian experience. Our aims in a general sense are the same. What we want are the good things of life, the things that make happiness. We want a happy India, a happy Britain, a happy world and a happy humanity. Concluding, Mr. Hallsworth urged them to take sufficient interest in their movement to enable the workers to create their own leaders.

### Mr. Marday Jones' Speech

Mr. T. Marday Jones conveyed the greeting of the British miners, who he said, were the finest body of fighters Labour has yet produced. Proceeding, he said it was not necessary for one to be months and months in India to be able to say that the greatest need of the masses was free education in the lower stages. The second need was organised Labour. He continued :—

"You are going through the same experience as we went through 50 years ago, when we were unorganised and were slaves, and when trade unionism was illegal. The masses here are more literate and helpful than in Britain at that time. They were however better in one respect. They had one race, one language, and one religion prevailing. Britain in India began education at the top. To-day, they are reaping the reward as the educated naturally resent the foreign yoke, and want them to clear out. But if the masses had been educated, they would have had to clear out long ago. Your need is education to all, until you have trained the workers to assume the leadership of Labour."

Mr. Marday Jones asked them to press the Government to recognise trade unionism in State industries. Every argument now used against the improvement of labour conditions, was used in Britain 50 years ago. "I tell you," he said "if you are worthy of the name of Indians, if you are worthy of Swaraj, unite against the Government and force legislation not ten years hence, but here and now, to clear women labour out of the mines, labour ought to be men labour; and women ought to be at the home rearing children. The day is coming when capitalism will give way to Socialism. You have got to work and see that religion and caste will never divide you." Mr. Jones related the story of the warder of a lunatic asylum, who when asked, how he was able to control so many, single-handed said "Lunatics never combine." You should not trust so much even the Labour Party in England. You must help yourself, and have trust in yourself, and the Labour Party will help you. The visit to India of Mr. A. A. Purcell and Mr. Joseph Hallsworth is a landmark in the history of the International Labour movement. Unite, and you will get Swaraj and when you get Swaraj, remember, you have to watch the rich ruling class, as we watch them in England.

## Proceedings and Resolutions.

### The Statutory Commission.

Consideration of the resolution regarding the Statutory Commission was then taken up. The resolution ran as follows :—

"This Congress realising that, inasmuch as the appointment of the Statutory Commission violates the principle of self-determination, and inasmuch as the Commission, as at present constituted, is, in its opinion, but an attempt to find ways and means to perpetuate the imperialistic domination of Great Britain over India, declares that the Statutory Commission should be boycotted.

"Further, this Congress appoints a committee, consisting of Messrs. Chamanlal, Joshi, Jhabwala, Kishorilal Ghose, Dange, Spratt, Daud and Sethi to draw up a Labour constitution for the future government of India, to be presented, and approved by the Executive Council, and published for the guidance of the working classes."

After the resolution had been moved by Mr. Kishorilal Ghose, and duly seconded and supported, an amendment was moved, adding, in the first part, the words "and calls upon the Parliamentary Labour Party to withdraw the two Labour representatives".



Mr. S. A. Dange, in opposing the amendment, said it breathed mendicancy, and was therefore humiliating.

The mover of the resolution accepted the amendment, and the resolution as amended was then passed by 50 votes against 30.

Poll was demanded, and the President promised to take it the next day. But a section of the Communists kept on protesting and some passages-at-arms were exchanged between the two sections. Eventually the Communists withdrew in protest.

The following other resolutions approved by the Subjects Committee were then discussed and passed :—(1) This Congress urges upon the Government of India to appoint a commission to revise the Workmen's Compensation Act and give adequate representation thereon to the Trade Union Congress.

(2) This Congress urges upon the Government of India the necessity of passing legislation fixing the maximum hours of work for all industrial workers at eight hours a day, and 48 hours a week.

### THIRD DAY—28TH DECEMBER 1927.

#### Release of Bengal Detenus Demanded.

The Trade Union Congress passed on this day the following resolutions :—

"While thanking the individual members of the British Labour Party for their strong support to the agitation in India for the release of the people incarcerated indefinitely without trial, this meeting of the Congress notes with regret that the policy of detaining people without trial sanctioned in 1924 by Lord Olivier as Secretary of State for India under the Labour Government, and continued since then by the Conservative Government, has not been repudiated by the party, and that no demand has been made by the party in and outside Parliament for the wholesale release of these unfortunate men; and trusts that effective steps would be taken by the British organised labour to compel the Government of India and the Government of Bengal either to release them or to bring them to trial in an ordinary court of law."

#### Miss Mayo's Attack.

"This Congress emphatically protests against the slanderous and libellous accusations made against the whole Indian nation by Miss Mayo in her book "Mother India," and desires that all Labour movements in the world should take note of it.

"Further, this Congress requests Mr. C. F. Andrews to write a brief reply on behalf of the All-India Trade Union Congress, which will be printed after its being submitted to and approved by the Executive Council.

#### Sickness and Infirmary Legislation.

"In view of the fact that in India there is no legislation, at present, providing for benefits for industrial workers during sickness, including confinement of women, infirmity and old age, this Congress urges upon the Government of India to pass immediately legislation making provision for these benefits.

#### Minimum Wages for Workers.

"In view of the fact that wages in India are extremely low and also in view of the fact that it is the right of the workers to get a minimum living wage, this Congress urges upon the Government of India to pass legislation to set up a machinery to determine the minimum wage."

#### Seamen's Grievances.

The Congress also passed resolutions regarding seamen's grievances, enforcement of the seamen's Recruitment Committee's recommendation for the introducing of a bill for amending the Merchant Shipping Act and the establishment of a seamen's recruitment bureau, and urging the shipping companies and the government to have an eight-hour day for seamen and mariners.

## Other Resolutions.

The Trade Union Congress passed a resolution appointing a Council of Action to organise a mass movement of the workers and peasants, to extricate them from their present condition of abject poverty. The Council was to be subject to control by the Executive Council of the T. U. C. to whom it should present a report of its activities and submit its programme of work.

The Congress urged the enforcement of the conventions passed at the International Labour Conference of 1926 regarding articles of agreement and inspection on board ship.

The Congress congratulated the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on having attained the tenth anniversary of the first workers' republic, in spite of Imperialist intervention.

Another resolution condemned the piece system obtaining in Government presses and urged the Government to appoint a committee to enquire into the grievances of pressmen and compositors, and called on the Government to see that the Factory Inspectors kept strict watch over factories and enforced the factory rules.

The Congress further declared its adherence to the memorandum submitted to the Government, by the Indian Colliery Employees Association Act regarding limitation of working hours underground, and vehemently protested against compulsion of labourers to work underground for more than eight hours at a stretch, under any circumstances.

The Congress further urged that Sundays should be observed as full holidays.

The Congress deplored the failure of the Anglo-Russian unity negotiations and urged that further attempts be made to bring about unity between the International Federation of Trade Unions, and Red International Labour.

The Congress condemned the policy of the Government of India in placing hindrances in the way of the affiliation of Trade Unions in the country with the All-India Trade Union Congress and their registration under the Trade Union Act.

Another resolution congratulated Mr. Philip Spratt on his release.

Another resolution urged that the menials in the Telegraph Department should be given the same rights and privileges as the subordinates in the Postal Department, and that they should not be considered as in any way inferior to the postal workers.

The Congress declared that as the Government was pursuing a policy of giving state aid to industries, in the form of bounties, it should see that the interest of the workers employed therein, was properly safe-guarded.

Mr. C. F. Andrews was elected President for the coming year, and Mr. Thengdi, Mr. Daud and Mr. B. N. Mukerji as Vice-Presidents. Mr. N. M. Joshi was re-elected General Secretary, and Mr. Ginwala as Treasurer. Mr. Jhabwalla, Mr. Dange and Mr. Bakhole were elected as Organising Secretary and Assistant Secretaries, respectively.

The Congress appointed Dewan Chamanlal, as the Indian workers' delegate at the next session of the International Labour Conference; and Mr. Thengadi, Mr. Sethi and Mr. P. C. Bose as advisers. The Congress then dissolved.

## The Gandhi-Saklatvala Correspondence.

### On the Utility of Trade Union Movement in India.

The following are the full texts of two letters, one from Mahatma Gandhi and the other from Ma. Saklatvala anent the inauguration of Trade Union movement in India for the welfare and prosperity of the labouring classes. The Mahatma in his letter to Saklatvala writes that the establishment of such Industrial organisation in India will jeopardise the position of the labourers as they will be tools in the hands of designing people who have

always an eye on the main chance. The Mahatma ascribes the inevitable evil to disintegration amongst the labourers. "Labour organisation can only exist in name in India," says Mahatma Gandhi.

Contrary is the view which Mr. Saklatvala holds. According to him all the energies of the nationalist leaders of all shades of opinion should be harnessed towards the early inauguration of labour and industrial organisations all over the country.

#### Mr. Gandhi's Letter.

Dear Friend, Srimati Anusuya Bai has sent me your letter to herself, and your joint letter to her, Gulzarilal and Desai. I have read them both carefully. I had your letter also. I could not reply to you earlier for want of your address.

As soon as I heard from Anusuya Bai, I put myself in communication with Motilalji. I am daily expecting his reply. You shall know it as soon as I receive it. I thank you for the confidence you repose in me and it will be a joy to me if I can render any personal service to you, but I am afraid my longing and ability to render service have to stop there.

So far as our ideals are concerned, we stand apart. Whilst Anusuya Bai and Shankarlal Banker, as also Gulzarilal and Desai, are absolutely free agents, they have exercised their choice of accepting my guidance in framing their labour policy and administration. I must therefore shoulder my share of the responsibility for what is happening about Labour in Ahmedabad. I have certainly advised them to keep Ahmedabad labour aloof from the other labour movements in India so long as Ahmedabad labour chooses to remain under their guidance. My reason is exceedingly simple. Labour in India is still extremely unorganised. The labourers have no mind of their own, when it comes to matters of national policy or even the general welfare of labour itself. Labourers in various parts of India have no special contact and no other mutual ties. It is provincial, and even in the same city it is highly communal. It is not everywhere wisely guided. In many places it is under selfish and highly unscrupulous guidance. There is no absolute cohesion amongst provincial labour leaders; and there is little discipline among sub-leaders. The latter do not uniformly tender obedience to their provincial chiefs. Leaders in different provinces have no single policy to follow. In these circumstances, an all-India union can only exist on paper. I hold it to be suicidal, therefore, for Ahmedabad to think of belonging to it. My own conviction is that Ahmedabad is rendering a service to labour all over India by its abstention, or as I call it, self-restraint. If it can succeed in perfecting its own organisation, it is bound to serve as a model to the rest of India and its success is bound to prove highly infectious. But I am free to confess that there is as yet no assurance of success in the near future. The energy of the workers is sorely tried in combating disruptive forces that ever continue to crop up. There is the Hindu-Muslim tension. There is the question of Touchables and Untouchables in Hinduism etc. Add to this extreme ignorance and selfishness among the labourers themselves. It is a marvel to me that labour in Ahmedabad has made the progress it has during the last 12 years of its corporate existence. If then Ahmedabad remains isolated it does so not selfishly, but for the sake of labour as a whole.

#### Labour and Capital.

One word as to the policy. It is not anti-capitalistic. The idea is to take from Capital, Labour's due share and no more: and this not by paralysing Capital, but by reform among the labourers from within and by their own self-consciousness; not again through the cleverness and manoeuvring of non-labour leaders, but by educating labour to evolve its own leadership and its own self-reliant, self-existing organisation. Its direct aim is not in the least degree political, but is internal reform and evolution of internal strength. The indirect result of this evolution, whenever it becomes complete, will naturally be tremendously political. I have not therefore the remotest idea of exploiting labour or organising it for any direct political end. It will be of itself a political power of first class importance when it becomes a self-existing unit. Labour, in my opinion, must not become a pawn in the hands of the politician on the political chess-board; and my aim can be achieved if I can retain the intelligent and voluntary co-operation of workers in Ahmedabad, and if our joint effort ultimately succeeds. This is my dream. I hug it because it gives me all the consolation I need and the policy I have outlined, you will recognise, is a direct outcome of my implicit belief in and acceptance of non-violence. It may be all a delusion; but it is as much a reality with me as life itself so long as I do not see it as a delusion, but see it as the only life-giving force. You will now see why I cannot, even if I had the power, respond to your appeal for dividing the funds collected

by me in accordance with your suggestion. But I may tell you that I have not even the power. The funds have been collected purely for Khadi work; and it would be criminal misappropriation on my part to divert them to any other use.

This letter may not please you. I shall be sorry if it does not. But I regard you as a fellow-seeker after truth and if my reading of you is correct, there is no reason why my having told you the truth and nothing but the truth should not please you immensely. It is not given to all of us to agree with one another in all our opinions; but it is given to every one of us to tender the same respect for the opinions and actions of our fellows as we expect for our own.

### Mr. Saklatvala's Reply.

Dear Comrade Gandhi,—I am in receipt of your letter of 10th May, and I see that you have written it from the Nandi Hills, where I presume you are recuperating from your illness. I trust you will be restored to health by the time this letter reaches you.

Let me say in my usual blunt way that "I am returning to my attack upon you." Of course, you understand the meaning and nature of my "attacks" upon you, namely, that recognising in you a man of indomitable spirit, with a real propagandist's heart and qualities, I want you to deal with the various Indian movements in the way in which success is made for such movements in other parts of the world.

I am not coming to you in the midst of your success, in the midst of great victories for our poor people, in the midst of great defeats and setbacks to our imperialist oppressors, with merely a fanciful appeal to you to adopt some new method. I come to you, rather, in the time of great reverses for our country, when on every front political, economic and social, we are suffering reverse upon reverse, are being pushed back everywhere, are disorganised, disunited and dispirited in all departments of public life, and our insouciant antagonists are launching attack after attack upon us.

I still want you to recognise that the forces within a nation do not depend merely on relative numbers. Now one small section of a nation and now another becomes an important factor, occupying a key position at some critical moment in the affairs of the country, and counting as a national force even though in itself a minority. The peasants and the villagers may become at times the most successful factor in defying the tax-gatherer; the soldiers and the fighters may become at times an important factor to reckon with, when in their own mind and consciousness, they are unwilling to launch out upon an unholy campaign such as the one carried out by the Government of India in China. And at times the industrial workers, however small in numbers, may become for a country the all-important factor of life, and may bring about a paralysis of the most powerful activities of the imperial exploiter or of a dominating class.

### Need for All-India Trade Union Movement.

Because our country is largely agricultural, it does not at all follow that in the economy of modern life our organised workers shall be of less value or shall become a less important section of the community than in any other country which is more industrialised and less agricultural, under similar circumstances. If a large country has to depend upon a small number of industrial workers as compared to agriculturalists, the power of the industrial workers does not become any the less on that account.

It is with the above observations that I have been constantly attempting to direct your mind to the necessity and importance of an organised industrial labour movement within our national activity. Such a movement, in the first place, must be national and embrace the whole country. It is not for you and me to-day to devise new and fantastic organisations when we see the value of the existing Trade Union movements in all the advancing and powerful countries of the world. We must have an All-India Trade Union movement.

I am not at the present moment arguing about your methods or about your ideals, I am only denouncing your idea that the organisation of labour should be sectional, should be communal and should be limited to a little spot like Ahmedabad. Did you ever try to have an Indian National Congress for Ahmedabad alone? Did you ever try to confine the Khaddar movement to Ahmedabad alone? Did you ever try to have the National Education movement confined to Ahmedabad? Why then should you try to restrict your ideal labour movement to Ahmedabad? You are not weakening the political movement, the Khaddar movement, the National Education movement, by encouraging Ahmedabad or any one important district to fall away and stand aloof from the whole national movement; then why should you do so in the case of the large national labour movement by asking and encouraging an important industrial centre like Ahmedabad to stand aloof and alone? Let me examine your reasoning at some length,

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### State of Indian Labour and the "Remedy."

You say labour in India is extremely unorganised. Do you not say, therefore, that an right in appealing to you to employ your great power in organising labour on an adequate national basis? You cannot argue that our numbers are unwieldy, for many Western countries have larger numbers of workers to deal with; nor can you find fault with the vastness of the area of our country, for both Russia and China have overcome their greater difficulties in the respect.

You complain that Indian labourers have no mind of their own on matters of general policy or even of labour policy. That is exactly where the value and need of propaganda comes in. Had our workers the conscious policy, I would not have been driven to urge you to help them and to preach to them in order to organise them. For Khaddar and for non-co-operation, you fearlessly carry out a whirlwind campaign all over the country amongst villagers and workers who had no conception of your deal before your propaganda reached them. You, with your colleagues, confessed to carrying out a labour propaganda in Ahmedabad; all that I ask is that Ahmedabad should be merely a part of a whole and that your services should be unreservedly given to the whole movement.

You say in your letter "Labourers in various parts of India have no social contract and no other mutual ties." That is where you ignore and overlook the most powerful common factor of life that has unfailingly united men and women in other countries despite their hundred and one and sometimes very bitter differences on religious, social or clan questions. No man has succeeded nor shall one now succeed in stopping modern industrialism, and the economic factor is the one common factor that applies to, and that unites men and women of various social, natural, religious and communal textures. Hours, wages, standards of life, political and legislative needs of the workers, are on the whole so uniform that when organised to battle around these wants, they have invariably forgotten and drowned their internal dissensions. The absence of labour unity and trade union discipline is a more serious loss to the India of to-day than we have yet learned to observe.

### Position of Ahmedabad Labour.

On the one hand, you blame Indian labour for being sectarian and communal and on the other hand, when the All-Indian Trade Union Congress is struggling to build up national and international labour unity, you feel tempted to induce Ahmedabad to stand separate and apart. You say, "It is not everywhere wisely guided." Does that not rather support my argument that you and other popular Congress and Swaraj leaders must take up the work? Then you decide various factors making for dissension and disunity amongst labour organisers. All that merely strengthens my appeal that all sane and truly selfless persons in public life should devote themselves to the task of organising the industrial and agricultural workers. The persons who have been organising labour in Ahmedabad may be doing well owing to the fortuitous circumstances that they possess more means than most other Indian groups could possibly have. There is a mild form of welfare work carried on and conciliation is established between individual complainants and their bosses. This is all. That is not modern trade unionism which is struggling for justice and the right of the workers to possess in common what they produce for the common good, and to control and regularise their own destiny. What has Ahmedabad labour done, what can Ahmedabad labour do, if it is torn away from the All-India Trade Union movement? It can certainly never aspire to be either a pattern or a model. Can Ahmedabad labour secure better hours, better wages, better education, a better franchise and the right of the worker to compensation in industrial accidents, unemployment allowances, old age pensions, etc., unless and until labour in the whole Bombay Presidency and in all India, obtain the same? Ahmedabad district by itself, as a district, even of well-organised labour, cannot possibly do anything for itself, whereas by holding aloof it can weaken the labour movement in the rest of India and can strengthen the power and opportunities of the master class to oppress the working class.

### No Need for Ahmedabad to Stand Aloof.

Ambalal Seth from Ahmedabad showed me a commendable welfare scheme of his own, but I soon discovered him to be the exception and not the rule. I

say unhesitatingly that 90 per cent of the labourers in Ahmedabad are living under conditions much worse than the conditions prevailing amongst the employees of some European firms that I observed in Cawnpur and Calcutta. I put it to you unhesitatingly and without exaggeration, that 90 per cent of the children of Ahmedabad workers are made to live by their masters, whom you consider so virtuous and patriotic, under conditions which would be condemned and punished as criminal if dogs, horses or other domestic animals were kept under them in most parts of Europe or America. The standard of wages in Ahmedabad is, on the average, lower than that prevailing in Bombay. Despite all this, nothing will hinder Ahmedabad labour from carrying on its own experiments, merely because it is affiliated to the All-India Trade Union Congress. All over the world the Trade Union Congresses of various countries contain within them Labour Federations and Trade Unions of different policies, and yet united together for national demands and general standards. That neither the All-India Trade Union Congresses nor any federation of textile workers can afford to remain for ever without its branches in an important industrial city like Ahmedabad is quite obvious, and your policy is only forcing a division in Ahmedabad itself. We had in Britain a very unfortunate example of a miners' organisation in Fifeshire, attempting such aloofness to the detriment of both sides, but they have at last seen the wisdom of working for unity. I do not see that any of your reasons prove that the circumstances in Ahmedabad are peculiar and necessitate its holding aloof to such an extent as to justify a damaging breach in the All-India Trade Union movement. The least that Ahmedabad can do is to agree to the affiliation to the T. U. C. The question of Ahmedabad policy being a model of help and assistance to other unions can arise and be of practical value only after such affiliation. Your personal decision as to whether you should confine your interest in labour to Ahmedabad alone, or should extend it to the larger national movement can remain the same even if the Ahmedabad Labour Union becomes affiliated to Congress.

#### Question of Labour Policy.

Now with regard to your Labour policy, which you explain so clearly, do let me submit at once that whatever your individual views may be on policy and whatever may be acceptable to, or not acceptable to the workers of Ahmedabad, all that has no bearing on Ahmedabad's affiliation to the T. U. C. of India, and all that provides no justification for Ahmedabad's aloofness from and splitting of a large national movement.

Your idea of a policy for labour, as you explained would, in reality, put you outside even those who are regarded as the "friends of the workers," never mind the champions of their cause. However you confess that you are still in a dream, and even that it may all be a delusion, you show the ordinary confusion of thought of all apologists for capitalism by not sharply distinguishing between capital, capitalism and the control of capital, and you do not clearly see that in order to avoid any clash between labour and capital, the ultimate stage must be one of the control of capital by labour which produces the entire hundred per cent of capital, and that society itself must be composed entirely of labourers by hand or brain serving one another as a common duty and not for the sake of making something out of it for individuals who would not labour but who would exercise their legal rights of confiscating the fruits of other people's labour. The one great thing to me, is that you so readily and frankly admit that labour should be so organised as to remain self-conscious, self-reliant and self-existing, evolving its own leadership and aim, and that such evolution, when developed, would be tremendously political and would dominate the chess-board of national policy. The outlook of yours satisfactorily defies the confusion, the timidity and the limitations of labour's rights that you seem inclined to impose upon the earlier stages of Labour development. Whilst Indian labour is illiterate, underpaid, underfed, mercilessly exploited and legislatively outplayed, it needs the help and assistance of outside people like yourself and those who are valiantly struggling to build up a Trade Union Congress and also a Workers' and Peasants' Party for all India. Black sheep there always will be, especially when society is fired with an evil zeal to make economic, political and social

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progress along the lines of an individualist competitive system, but I have really met and seen in India, some fine men and women working in the cause of labour, who would be equal in trust-worthiness to any European organisers, although perhaps less experienced. Hence my second request to you personally, which I still press for, viz., that besides securing the affiliation of Ahmedabad to the A. I. T. U. C., you personally give your valuable assistance to that body, especially in the matter of organising industrial workers and peasants on a large scale all over India. Despite your failing health, you are an active and truly All-India propagandist capable of covering enormous areas in a short time. Your popularity and charm enable you to capture the mass psychology and would render easier the otherwise stupendous task of organising an illiterate, over-awed and semi-starved population of many millions; your inspiring co-operation would give zest to the other voluntary workers in labour's cause, and I may even frankly say that your own new activity would give a suitable opening for practical work to the thousands of our youth who once enlisted in your movement and then cooled down in the absence of a practical and convincing programme.

### Our Immediate Task.

I do not consider it necessary to discuss the various reactionary sentences that you use against the full economic and political rights of labour. During the past month during the debate in the House of Commons on the diabolical Trade Union Bill, we have heard Tory and Liberal capitalists use almost identical sentences and arguments, but all the intelligent working class would realise such sentiments to be but a cloak for the unholy desire of a rapacious and murderous employing class. In your case you merely lay it down as your speculative idea of what the early stages of labour organisation would be, and it is not worth while quarrelling over so long as I can see that in the ultimate outcome of labour organisation you are not drawing any close line of unnatural limitations.

You may think it must be 20 years hence before this final stage can be reached, and I may think it can be reached within 2 years, but it is not a question to be decided by you and me. It can only be decided by events. Our immediate task and duty is to unite together and to start vigorously on this great work.

I also do not share your views regarding the use of public funds entrusted to you. By calling it a Khaddar Fund, you are warping your own visions and limiting it in terms of yarn and cloth, but I feel sure that the public who subscribe funds to you are doing so with the idea of working out the emancipation and liberation of their country and are not sending you instalments as shareholders in a primitive company with circumscribed duties in their Articles of Association. Every national movement must fail and will fail if, under modern conditions of industrialised life and capitalist power, the labourers and the peasantry are not organised. As much of my future programme depends upon your present decision I shall be grateful for early reconsideration of the matter by you.

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# The Indian Industrial Congress.

MADRAS—29TH DECEMBER 1927.

## The Presidential Address.

The Indian Industrial and Commercial Congress commenced its fifth session at Madras on the 29th December under the presidency of Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah. After Sir Muthia Chetty read his address welcoming the delegates Sir Ibrahim read his presidential address. In the course of his speech he said :—

I should like to take this opportunity of congratulating you all upon having organised yourselves into a Federation of the Commercial and Industrial interests of India. Time was when people engaged in trade, commerce and industry believed their work was done if they attended to their immediate pursuits. The large vision of co-operative existence hardly existed. Circumstances have, however, changed and it is now recognised that it is essential for us to organise ourselves for the promotion of our common interests. We have realised by experience that the formation of an organisation to watch the needs of trade, commerce and industry in India, is the only effective way to promote the economic interests of the country, and we have realised that it is part of our duty to devote a portion of our time to the common good of all. The response which this Congress has received is gratifying ; but, I am sure, you will all admit that a great deal more requires to be done to associate with us all the representatives of the many and varied interests of India, so that the organisation may acquire the power to make its voice felt ; that commerce, trade and industry be organised in every important city and town : and that all questions be ventilated not from this platform alone but from each centre of organisation. Our duty to the Congress should be discharged with such attention as would ensure the successful achievement of our aims and objects for the promotion of the economic cause of our motherland.

## Provincial Sentiment.

I have made these remarks because I have heard with regret that in some quarters economic interests are regarded as distinct as between province and province, and there is a tendency to introduce provincial particularism. I think it is necessary to remember that the division of India into provinces is for administrative purposes only, and that separate local administrations do not mean any conflict of economic interests. It is stated that the problems coming before the Indian Legislature are sometimes visualised from the interests of different provinces, resulting in divisions detrimental to the real interests of the country. In public affairs we have more than enough of divisions and I earnestly trust that at least in the economic sphere the wider interests of India's prosperity as a whole will be the guiding light of all our activities.

Every Indian is necessarily interested in the question as to whether India has kept pace with the economic progress reached by other countries in the world and whether the economic policy pursued by Government in India has proved really to her advantage or to the advantage of her rulers.



### Fiscal Policy and India.

I have referred to the advantage in the matter of markets which accrued to Britain in consequence of her wielding political power in a vast Empire. So far as the British Dominions are concerned, they are fiscally autonomous and regulate their policy primarily in their own interests. The benefits which accrue to Britain from her Dominions is in the nature of such preference as they may from time to time give to her. With regard to other parts of the Empire, especially India, whose political destiny she is controlling, she determines the fiscal policy applied to them. The question is whether the fiscal policy imposed upon India by virtue of political domination has resulted in Britain's own advantage. I am emphatically of opinion that if Britain had developed the resources of the vast population of India consisting of 320 millions she would have been independent of all other markets. A prosperous India would have provided a market for superior goods to an extent which Britain would have found herself unable to meet. The result has been that the economic policy which she has pursued in India has reacted upon herself. Britain had in her Eastern Empire a potential buyer of vast proportions but she grossly neglected its possibilities as a purchaser of better class goods and is suffering for it.

To try to relieve unemployment in Britain by manipulating exchange may succeed temporarily; but it is an expedient which may prove of doubtful advantage for the future well-being not only of India but also of Britain herself. It is not possible to find buyers at seemingly cheap rates for any length of time, when the economic foundation of the masses is affected thereby.

### "Sacred Trust."

You are all aware that Britain seriously claims to hold this country as a "sacred trust" for the people of India. Lord Ronaldshay, an ex-Governor of Bengal, has reiterated this claim in a recent speech in the course of which he says:—

"The small band of merchant adventurers who went out to India about A. D. 1600 with a charter of Queen Elizabeth in their pockets only intended to carry on a lucrative trade with the East, and had no idea that they were laying the foundation of a Great Empire. I believe that the Indians fell to the Englishman's character and not to force. There has also been an element of chance, or, as I prefer to call it, Providence. Britain appeared on the scene when India was torn by Civil war, and her rulers incapable of restoring peace and order. Thus Great Britain found a clear field for the display of British character and the present system in India has been gradually built up in consequence.

"Step by step British statesmen and their advisors have realised that the presence in India of their countrymen was not an adventure but a mission. That they were not there to exploit India of her wealth, but to hold it as a sacred trust for a people who had fallen on evil times and that Great Britain was given the task of assisting them again to their feet."

### Discharge of Duty by Trustees.

In view of this claim, it becomes desirable to examine how the "trustees" have discharged their duty to India during the century and a half they have been in supreme control of this country. This has not been the only occasion when responsible people in Britain have repudiated the charge of exploitation of India of her wealth and have called it a sacred trust

for the people of India. If Britain was a disinterested "trustee" animated by an earnest desire to do its best for the people of India, it would redound to her great credit. If, as a result of her long trusteeship, there had been a happy and contented India, her association with this country would undoubtedly be regarded as providential. The question is whether Britain has proved a disinterested trustee and whether the long association of this country with her in the economic sphere has made the people of India happy and contented. The answer is supplied by the following reply given by the Finance Member of the Government of India in answer to an interpellation in the Imperial Legislative Council in the year 1917, agricultural incomes of course being excluded :—

"The Hon'ble Sir William Mayer replied :—

In 1915-16, the latest year for which statistics are available, 24,393 persons, firms, etc., paid income-tax on incomes between Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 9,999. The number of assesseees in 1925-26, with incomes between Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 24,999, and of Rs. 25,000 and upwards, is not separately known, as these limits were not adopted for the classification of incomes in the income-tax returns prior to the current year. The forms prescribed for the returns have now been revised so as to show these limits, but the figures required by the Hon'ble Member will not be available till some time after the close of the current financial year for which the new returns will be first used. I may mention, however, that 11,378 persons, firms etc., paid income-tax in 1915-16 on incomes of Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 29,999 and 2,336 on incomes of Rs. 30,000 and over."

What a commentary this reply furnishes on the real economic conditions of India! Britain has failed to realise that the purchasing power of a prosperous India would be the envy of the world.

#### Trade Policy.

I should like to ask whether Britain expects that India will put with a policy more or less in this spirit. The concern of our trustees seems to be to obtain all the revenues that they may require for carrying on the administration of India and to sell to India increased quantities of her manufactured goods. Britain does not appear to have applied her mind to the development of the economic resources of this country. All that she has been concerned with has been the immediate sale in India of increased quantities of her manufactured goods. She imposed upon India, I dare say, in the conscientious discharge of her "sacred trust," a policy of free trade to which her own dominions, let alone other civilised nations, refused to subscribe. I do not wish to imply that this was a considered policy because if her statesmen had bestowed the least consideration on the problem, they would have clearly realised how detrimental to Britain's own economic interests such a policy as applied to India was. In the political conditions prevailing in Britain, it seems, British manufacturing interest exercises great influence; and that interest's immediate concern seems to be to sell her goods for the time being and allow the future to take care of itself. This short-sighted policy has, as already pointed out, reacted upon herself and for the last three years the best minds of Britain have been applying themselves to a solution of the problem of unemployment which is but the creation of her own indifference to the economic development of this vast country. It is only statesmanship that can look ahead and take measures which are likely to

ensure future good. It is a question whether the experience now gained will be utilised in the right direction. If even at this late stage, the right policy is adopted in India, the purchasing power of this country can increase to such an extent as to make Britain independent of other countries for her markets.

### Overseas Trade of India and Japan.

That there is no exaggeration in this statement may be judged from the development of the foreign trade of Japan, an Asiatic country, as compared to India. The total value of imports into India in 1915-16 was 150 crores. In 1924-25 India imported goods to the value of 352 crores of rupees. In ten years, therefore, Indian imports increased by 133 per cent. Japan imported goods worth 532 million yen in the year 1925, while in 1925 her imports had increased to 2,572 million yen, or a rise of 530 per cent. The total Indian exports in 1915-16 were 199 crores. In 1924-25 they rose to 400 crores of rupees or a rise of 100 per cent. Japanese exports in 1915 were 708 million yen, while in 1925 they had reached 2,305 million yen, or a rise of more than 300 per cent. If Japan has been able within a short period of ten years to develop her overseas trade to this extent, India has to be content with what is in comparison only a moderate growth. These figures may be quoted in their rupee equivalents. Japanese imports rose from 66 crores in 1915 to 321 crores in 1925 or within 31 crores of the whole of Indian imports in that year. Japan with a population of one fifth of that of India has within a short period of time reached a level of import trade very near that of India. As regards exports, 1915 Japanese exports were 88 crores of rupees against India's 199 crores. In 1925 Indian exports were 400 crores while Japanese exports had risen to 288 crores. If the policy pursued by the Japanese Government for the development of her trade had been followed in India, there is no reason why Indian progress should not have been on the same if not on a larger scale. Japan does not possess the same natural advantages as India holds and the potentialities of the growth of trade in India are far greater, provided the Government in India adopts a policy similar to that followed by Japan.

### Appointment of Commissions.

Every civilised Government in the world considers it its first duty to raise the economic resources of its people and increase its national wealth. It is true that some spasmodic efforts have been made by the Government of India to promote the economic interests of the country. They have constituted several commissions to examine various aspects of this question. We have had an Industrial Commission, a Railway Commission, two Currency and Exchange Commissions, one Fiscal Commission and now an Agricultural Commission. The economic problem may be sub-divided into the subjects entrusted for examination to each of these Commissions, but it is hardly possible to reach satisfactory conclusions and carry out a broad economic policy by piecemeal examination of the problem.

### Agriculture and Industry.

Apart from the mineral wealth of the land, agriculture provides the main basis of national income and in the words of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, of Britain, a country's economic prosperity depends upon obtaining as far as possible all its supplies from its own soil and from its own factories. If the economic problem of India is really the serious concern of the British

Government, it should be examined with a view to reach such a good. Agricultural produce and minerals supply materials in a crude condition. The process is not complete till the product so obtained from the land is prepared for ready use. Agriculture and industry are not two distinct problems but are intertwined and form one unit. The supply obtained from the soil, whether mineral or agricultural, must be prepared for the use of the people in a shape fit for such use. Agriculture, industry, transport, currency and exchange, and the fiscal policy should all form the subject of one or simultaneous inquiry having as its aim and object the economic growth of India. Unless this is done in a serious spirit and action is taken primarily in the interests of India, the problems of Indian economics cannot be effectively solved. You will observe that except in one solitary instance all the commissions appointed by Government have been constituted on the basis of a European Chairman and a European majority. The policy suitable to be applied to the economic problems of India is not determined by Indians but by Britishers and it is but natural that, with the training they have received, they should visualise each problem from the point of view as to how it will affect Britain. Fifteen years have elapsed between the appointment of the Industrial Commission and the appointment of the Agricultural Commission. In addition to the time involved in the examination by Commissions of the various problems entrusted to their charge, considerable time elapses before Government reach their decisions on the Report of such Commissions. Everything must depend upon the spirit in which such recommendations are accepted by the Government of India and are carried out in practice.

#### Policy of Protection.

After persistent demands by the people of India for a change of policy, the Fiscal Commission was appointed. The recommendation of the Commission for the adoption of a policy of Protection qualified by the word "discriminating" was adopted in 1922. No one with any sense of responsibility would advocate indiscriminate protection. A protective policy adopted by any country is always applied with such discrimination as may appear suitable from time to time to its Government and its Legislature. The very fact that a special adjective, not known in the economic literature as a qualification, had to be applied in India shows the hesitation of the British Government in subscribing to the policy of protection as accepted and successfully worked by all civilised nations of the world including British Dominions. Presumably their conscientious scruples as trustees and not as the principal suppliers of India's requirements of manufactured goods led them to adopt this course. It is interesting to examine how this policy has been worked by her during the five years that it has been in operation. Take the case of the steel industry, whose national importance is recognised by Lord Irwin, the present Viceroy of India, and Lord Lloyd, the ex-Governor of Bombay, in their book. "The Great Opportunity" issued in 1918 in the following words:—

"The experience of war has united opinion on at least one point, and that is that industries essential to the security of the country must be protected and maintained against foreign competition by State action. The attention of the public has been particularly drawn to certain key industries whose necessity to war production made them the object of special attack by Germany in the years before the War. But we believe that the number of these key industries is in reality much larger than is supposed and once

it is conceded that the industries of the Empire must in all their stages be so safe-guarded as to ensure them the utmost measure of development, with the double object of increased production and of self-protection in the event of war, it will be found that little remains of the old *laissez-faire* doctrines of the nineteenth century."

The Indian Steel Industry was the first to receive protection under the new policy. After elaborate examination by the Tariff Board protection was granted to it for a period of three years in the first instance. During that period the extent of protection granted proved wholly inadequate. The industry was not able to pay the dividends due on its preferred capital, let alone its ordinary capital. It is needless to point out that the object of protection is not merely to keep an industry alive. The real basis of protection is to develop the industry, create internal competition and provide increased avenues of employment. If a protected industry is unable to pay a reasonable dividend on the capital engaged in manufacture, it is futile to expect that fresh capital will be forthcoming to create internal competition. Protection has been extended to the industry for a further period of 7 years but that is also on a basis which does not provide any incentive to establish steel manufacture in other parts of India, and to provide by internal competition that relief to the taxpayer and the ultimate economic advantage to the country which a policy of protection is expected to secure.

#### Cotton Industry.

You must have followed the controversy which arose on the question of protection to the cotton industry of India and the halting measure which was the result. It is perhaps too much to expect that Britishers in India will adapt themselves to local conditions in the right spirit and to the right extent. They have been trained from their childhood in the principles of free trade and they must find it difficult to adapt themselves to a different policy suitable to Indian conditions which will prove beneficial not only to India but will be advantageous to Britain herself. I have already stated how the growth of national wealth will increase India's purchasing power.

#### Taxation and Savings.

You are all aware that taxation in India was substantially increased as a result of the Great War. India, although but a minor belligerent associated with Britain, has had to bear additional taxation. Britain was one of the principal belligerents and had to make great sacrifices to carry the war to a successful conclusion with the result that her standard of taxation rose to a very high level. After the war it has been the constant endeavour of Britain and other western nations to reduce the extent of taxation prevailing in their countries. Public opinion has been insistent and has had to be given effect to by democratic countries including Britain, in which administration is regulated by the voice of the people. In India we have not heard of any mention of reducing the heavy burden of taxation imposed upon this country as a result of the war. Taxation has been raised in some cases to a point where the stage of diminishing returns has been reached. This makes it evident that standard of taxation is in excess of the economic capacity of the people. It is an admitted fact that the economic growth of a country depends upon the surplus savings of a nation. These savings constitute the capital available for development of trade, commerce and industry. If the State imposes taxation to the level of diminishing returns and leaves practically no savings

to provide capital for development that country must slide on a downward course in the matter of economic progress. The essential need of the moment is, therefore, a thorough inquiry as to the standard of taxation maintained in this country.

I am prepared to admit that adequate sources of revenue must be provided to enable Government to carry on the administration on a satisfactory basis, but the extent of the burden ought not to be beyond the capacity of the people to bear it. There are two ways of solving the problem. One is to develop the tax-bearing capacity of the people and the other is to apply judicious retrenchment.

### India's Capacity to Bear Taxation

It has been argued that since the advent of the British, India has grown more prosperous and that it has more money now than it possessed before. Assuming it is a fact that India is better off, so far as the amount of money is concerned, it is to be remembered that the cost of living has substantially increased, that the purchasing power of money has depreciated, that there are no appreciable accumulations of wealth as a result of savings and that the masses are steeped in poverty. The average consumption of piece-goods, one of the necessities of life, was 18 yards per head of population before the War and it is now reduced to 10 yards per head. If the position was different, the state of diminishing returns on the present scale of taxation would not have been reached. Is there then any wonder that there is a persistent demand for retrenchment in State expenditure? I admit that efforts have been made in that direction but they have not been sufficiently far-reaching. In considering the question of retrenchment we are confronted with the stock argument that administrative machinery must be maintained at a high pitch of efficiency, the test of efficiency being determined by the authorities themselves. A great deal of harm has resulted by this slogan of efficiency. It must be obvious that a country can get only such efficiency as it can afford to pay for. The question, therefore, arises whether India's economic resources permit the maintenance of the standard of efficiency imposed upon it. No one can force for any length of time a standard of efficiency which is beyond a country's means. The essential duty of a civilised Government is to develop the economic resources of the country in order to increase the tax-bearing capacity of the people and the supply of capital for its further progress.

### State Revenue: India and Japan.

A philosopher has said that there is no such thing as happiness or misery in the world. What there is a comparison of one condition with another. It is but natural that India under British rule should compare the relative development of the economic condition of another Asiatic country under self-government. From a statement published in the financial and economic annual of the Government of Japan for 1926, it appears that the State revenue of the country has risen in the course of forty years, from 1887—88 to 1926—27, (comparatively a small period in the history of a nation) from 88 million yen to 1659 million yen. Japan's capacity to bear this heavy increased taxation has been developed to such an extent as to enable the people to bear the increased burden of administrative expenditure. Putting these figures into rupees we find that the taxation per head of population in Japan in 1887-88 was Rs. 3 while in 1926-27 it has risen to Rs. 35 per head,

India's State revenue during the same period rose from 77 crores of rupees to 220 crores or a rise of three times as against Japan's 20 times. Working out India's figures on the basis of population gives the following result, *viz.*, Rs. 2-8 per head in 1887-88 and Rs. 7 per head in 1925-26. India naturally asks why there should be such a marked increase in Japan's property while India's growth is comparatively so little. Can any one blame India if she reaches the conclusion that this disparity in the state of the economic development of two Asiatic countries is due in the one case to the fact that Japan as a self-governing nation is able to concentrate on the economic development of its people while under British rule India has to be content with a policy dictated by the Board of Directors located in London and called the Secretary of State in Council?

### Labour and Unemployment.

At the commencement of this address I had occasion to refer to some conflict of interest. Another movement deserving support and encouragement which has been organised to improve the condition of labour in India is also having the effect of creating divisions amongst ourselves. The labour movement has great potentialities for the good of India. I do not consider that the interests of capital and labour are in any way in conflict in this country. It is the prosperity of industry which provides means for the good of labour. How important the question of national employment is may be judged from the words of our present Viceroy, Lord Irwin, and Lord Lloyd, the ex-Governor of Bombay, expressed in their book already referred to. They have said: "It is generally admitted that the necessary employment on which ultimately the financial and social establishment of the country must depend can only be found in an increase in the total output of the country." Lord Irwin is now the Viceroy and Governor-General of India. He has proved a sympathetic ruler and has shown his great anxiety for the welfare of this country. He cannot but be aware how serious the problem of middle-class unemployment in India is. State-aided universities are turning out every year a large number of graduates many of whom find themselves stranded for want of employment and of earning their bread. Public opinion has been insistently drawing attention to this problem and demanding adequate measures to meet it. Lord Irwin who has admitted in his book that "the necessary employment on which ultimately the financial and social establishment of the country must depend" is now at the head of the Indian administration. Is it too much to expect that he will signalise his administration by taking adequate and effective measures for relieving unemployment in India, ensuring the ultimate financial and social establishment of the people of India? I agree that the real remedy "can only be found in an increase in the total output of the country." I earnestly trust that he will apply the same measures in India for finding adequate employment for its people. America has proved that the growth of national prosperity is not inconsistent with high wages. What is required is a national economic policy in which the whole country can share. There can be no Indian throughout the length and breadth of this country who does not feel for the distress in which the masses of India have to live. It cannot be disputed that a large proportion of the population is obliged to subsist on insufficient food and inadequate clothing. Go to any Indian, be he the greatest capitalist, and discuss the subject with him and you will find that he feels as keenly as any one else the condition in which a large mass of the people of India are obliged to live.

It is a mere commonplace to say that the interests of all classes are common. If agriculture and industry are prosperous there is sufficient money to go round. Prosperous industries mean higher wages; and higher wages mean greater comfort to labour and increased purchasing power. If agriculture and industry are in a depressed condition, there is nothing to go round and the principal sufferers are the masses, whose living depends upon these two sources of national income. Every effort therefore in the direction of improved agriculture and successful industry is to the greatest good of masses. In the peculiar conditions prevailing in India, conflict arises because there is insufficient national income to satisfy the essential needs and requirements of the people. It is therefore necessary in the interests of both that labour and capital should combine throughout India to promote the best interests of agriculture, trade, commerce and industry.

### Capital and Labour.

I make these observations because I have observed a tendency amongst labour leaders to overlook the fact that their interest is dependent on successful industry. The manner in which bills for the protection of industry in the central legislature have been debated indicates to some extent the angle of vision from which this problem is visualised by some of them. Organised labour has the power of dictating terms to industry, provided it is prosperous. Every well-wisher of the masses desires that labour should be organised not from the narrow point of view of immediate interests but of the real and permanent interest of the industry which provides employment for them. In consequence of the war the cotton industry passed through abnormal times of prosperity. Labour though not quite organised was able to dictate terms in the matter of wages. It is axiomatic that capital cannot do without labour and labour cannot exist without capital. Both are necessary concomitants of the economic growth of a country. In the common interests of both, all the civilised countries in the world including British Dominions have adopted a policy of such protection as will make industry successful and provide employment to their people. Labour leaders would be well-advised in co-operating with capital in bringing pressure upon Government to apply the revised fiscal policy in the right spirit and on a scale commensurate with the needs of the country. It would suffice to draw attention to the fact that the national income of the United States of America, an agricultural and industrial country is Rs. 2,000 per head of population. Britain which is mainly industrial has a national income of about Rs. 1,000 per head of population, while Canada and Australia two; self-governing British Dominions have an income of Rs. 550 per head. India's national income was estimated at Rs. 30 per head some years ago. Allowing for mistakes and subsequent economic growth, the national income is now estimated at from Rs. 60 to Rs. 100 per head. Assuming the larger figure, it means that after payment of Rs. 10 per head in the shape of Imperial, Provincial and local taxation, the population must subsist on Rs. 90 per head per annum or Rs. 7-8 per month! What can possibly be the extent of the purchasing power of a people so circumstanced? The essential need of the country is to develop its national income and it is to the interest of both capital and labour to unite for the promotion of the common interests of our motherland.



## Proceedings and Resolutions.

After the President's speech resolutions of general importance on banking, currency and exchange and State Aid to Industries were discussed and passed.

### 1.—Hakim Ajmal Khan's Death.

Before taking up these subjects for consideration, the following condolence resolution concerning the sudden death of Hakim Ajmal Khan was put from the chair and carried, the whole audience standing in silence :—

"That this Congress has learnt with profound regret and sorrow the death of India's well-known leader, Hakim Ajmal Khan, the champion of Indian nationalism and peace and records its sense of loss to the country and wishes to express its deep sympathy and condolence to the family of the deceased".

### 2.—Enquiry into Indian Banking Conditions.

Mr. D. P. Khaitan (Calcutta), next moved the following resolution on the question of banking :—

"This Congress urges upon the attention of Government of India, the resolution moved in the Legislative Assembly by Mr. Sarabhai N. Haji regarding the appointment of an Indian Banking Enquiry Committee consisting of a majority of Indians and an Indian Chairman with special reference to look into the organisation of Indian indigenous banking with a view to foster and develop the same and strongly urges upon the Government for the immediate appointment of such a Committee.

### 3.—Reserve Bank Bill.

Mr. B. F. Madon (Bombay) moved the following resolution :—

This Congress enters its emphatic protest against abrupt postponement by the Government of India of the Reserve Bank Bill and urges that Government should not go back on the principles of a State Bank which they have already accepted, and puts on record its emphatic opinion that with a view to command the confidence of the Indian public its Directorate must contain an effective and elected Indian majority of the Indian commercial community.

### 4.—The Ratio Question.

On the motion of Mr. Jamal Mahomed Sait (Madras) the following resolution was next unanimously adopted :—

That this Congress is strongly of opinion that the fixing of the exchange ratio at 1s. 6d. has proved detrimental to the best interests of the country and therefore earnestly urges upon Government to re-open the question with a view to establish the exchange ratio at 1s. 4d.

### 5.—Protection to Cotton Textile Industry.

On the subject of industries Sir Dinshaw M. Petit next moved a resolution expressing the profound sense of dissatisfaction of the Congress at the negligible protection reluctantly doled out by the Government of India to the cotton textile industry in the shape of a levy of import duty on foreign yarn and supporting the unanimous demand of the Indian commercial community for a four per cent extra duty on all piece-goods. Sir Petit drew attention to the fact how the Government had set at naught the definite recommendations on the subject made by the majority of the members of the Textile Tariff Board. Textile industries being one of the premier industries of the country, the Government ought to give sufficient protection.

### 6.—State Aid to Cottage Industries.

Mr. R. H. Gandhi (Rangoon) moved the following resolution :—

"This Congress is of opinion that the development of cottage industry in India is imperative for the amelioration of the economic condition of the people and recommends to all the provincial Governments, which have up till now not enacted legislation for granting State aid to such industries, to enact such legislation at the earliest possible opportunity, and recommends to all Governments which have such a legislation to amend it if necessary on right lines."

Resolutions urging the reduction of railway freight rates with regard to the transportation of raw materials, and stating that the Railway Rates Advisory Committee should be made a statutory body, were next adopted. The Congress then adjourned.

*SECOND DAY—30TH DECEMBER 1927.*

**7.—Boycott of Commission Advocated.**

On the second day the first resolution was moved by Mr. Sheth Walchand Hirachand (Bombay). The resolution runs as follows:—

This Congress strongly protests against the exclusion of Indians from the Royal Commission on constitutional Reforms. The Congress regards this as a calculated affront to this country and strongly urges All Indian Chambers of Commerce and other commercial bodies not to give evidence before the Commission or otherwise assist it in its deliberations.

**8.—Indian Mercantile Marine.**

Mr. Narottam Morarjee (Bombay) moved the following resolution on the subject of Indian mercantile marine:

This Congress reiterates the resolution passed at the Calcutta session on the question of the Indian mercantile marine and urges the following recommendations for immediate acceptance and action by Government: Reservation of the coasting trade of India for vessels owned and controlled by Indians starting and developing the ship-building industry in this country by liberal help from the State.

This Congress while, welcoming the establishment of the Indian Mercantile Marine training ship, "Dufferin" in Bombay, urges that another training-ship be stationed for the Bay of Bengal and also strongly urges upon the Government of India to make it obligatory on the ships plying on the coast to recruit at least 50 per cent of their officers from those who obtain the necessary certificate of competency after undergoing training on the Training ship.

The Congress strongly objects to the "Deferred Rebate" system and calls upon the Government to take immediate steps to abolish the same without any further delay.

The Congress further urges upon the Government of India to nominate an Indian in connection with Indian shipping on the sub-committee for considering the uniformity of the merchant shipping laws in the Empire as suggested at the Imperial Conference held in London in 1925.

**9.—Inland Water Communications.**

Mr. D. S. Erulkar (Calcutta) next moved a resolution recommending to the Government of India to make adequate specialised facility for the working of coasting vessels and the shipping and landing traffic for the coast at the major and the minor ports on the coast of India and to institute an enquiry for the development of inland water communications with special reference to the unfair railway competition affecting them as unanimously recommended by the Acworth Railway Committee and also to reserve Inland navigation to ships owned and controlled by Indians.

**10.—Abolition of Import and Export Restrictions.**

On the motion of Mr. Khaitan the following resolution was next adopted:

This Congress while appreciating the desirability of facilitating the growth of International Economic and Industrial relations is strongly of opinion that the time has not yet come for this country to commit itself in any way to the draft International Convention of the International Economic Conference with regard to the abolition of Import and Export Prohibitions and Restrictions in view of India not being economically and industrially sufficiently developed compared with advanced western countries.

**11.—Export Duty on Hides.**

The Congress next adopted a resolution strongly opposing the idea of altering the export duty on hides into a cess and confirming the resolution passed in the

last session of the Congress to the effect that the export duty on raw skins and hides be retained and increased to 15 per cent. This resolution was moved by Mr. Khaitan and seconded by Mr. Mahomed Ismail (Madras).

#### 12.—Protection for Lac Industry.

On the motion of Mr. M. P. Gandhi (Calcutta) the Congress passed a resolution that a prohibitive export duty should be imposed on unmanufactured lac or that some other suitable and adequate steps should be taken with a view to preserve and develop the shellac manufacturing industry in India.

#### 13.—India's Representation at International Conferences.

Mr. S. N. Hajee (M. L. A.) moved the following resolution on India's representatives at International conferences :

This Congress is emphatically of opinion that India should be represented at all International and Imperial conferences by Indians only and always by a full quota of delegates and advisers and strongly condemns the policy of appointing non Indians to be her representatives at any such conferences and while welcoming the endorsement by the Credentials Committee of the Ninth International Labour Conference of the fundamental principle that the delegation of a country to the Labour Conference should be national in character, urges upon the Government of India that the nomination of such representatives to the League of Nations, and other Conferences should be from a panel of representatives elected by the Legislative Assembly and the nomination of representatives to the International Labour Conference, and the like Conferences should be from a panel of representatives elected by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce.

This Congress reiterates its demand that the High Commissioner for India should always be an Indian and that he should be placed in the same position as the High Commissioners of different self-governing colonies with regard to representing their respective Governments at International and Imperial Conferences.

This Congress recommends the name of Mr. Narottam Morarjee to represent the employers in this country at the eleventh session of the International Labour Conference and the following gentlemen as his advisers :—

Mr. Debi Prasad Khaitan, Mr. P. Mukherji, President, The Punjab Chamber of Commerce, Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetti, and Mr. K. M. Desai, Secretary, Burma Indian Chamber of Commerce.

This Congress protests against the arbitrary method adopted by Government in the nomination of the Indian Delegation to the World Economic Conference of 1927 intended to focus the non-official public opinion of the important countries of the world, which turned out to be inadequate in number, partly non-national in composition and altogether lacking the confidence of the people, and urges upon the Government to make such nominations in accordance with the views of the Indian Commercial Associations in this country.

#### 14.—Imperial Preference.

Mr. Sheth Walchand Hirachand moved next the following resolution :—

This Congress deprecates the methods adopted by the Government of India for the introduction of Imperial Preference as evinced in the passing of the Indian Iron and Steel Protection Act 1922 and the terms of reference of the recently appointed Cinematograph Enquiry Committee.

#### 15.—Other Resolutions.

The Congress next passed resolutions urging the need for altering the Sea Customs Act with regard to the system of assessment to import duty and the law relating to income-tax with a view to see that income-tax was assessed on income made in one year but on the annual average of income made during a period of three years.

#### 16.—Super Tax.

Sir Dinshaw M. Petit moved the following resolution :—

"That as the super-tax works as an impediment and discouragement in the

way of the development of Indian industries and commerce and as this tax which was imposed as a war measure cannot be justified in its continuance now in normal times this Congress urges upon Government the necessity for the abolition of the tax."

#### 17.—Stamp Duty.

On the motion of Mr. Vidyasagar Pandya, the following resolution was passed :—

"(a) This Congress protests against the proposed amendments in the Negotiable Instruments Act declaring any restrictions endorsed by a holder in due course on a cheque as null and void, and requests Government to drop the recent Bill on this subject.

"(b) This Congress, while thanking the Government for having exempted the Bills of Exchange payable on demand from the stamp duty recommends Government of India to exempt also internal bill of exchange payable otherwise than on demand and also to amend article 53 (a) of the schedule to the Stamp Act of 1899 with a view to remove a flaw which has practically negated the exemption given by the Indian Finance Bill of 1927 and further urges that the duty on documents or indebtedness such as loan and mortgage deeds be reduced."

#### 18.—Constitution of Port Trusts.

Mr. Fakirjee Cowasjee moved the following resolution :—

"This Congress strongly urges the respective Governments to so amend the Constitution, Rules and Regulations of the Port Trust Boards in Indian Ports, whereby 75 per cent of the members therein should consist of Indians elected by commercial and other important bodies and whereby it should be obligatory on each board to make its meetings open to the public."

#### 19.—Indianisation of Services.

Mr. Erulkar moved the following resolution :—

"This Congress views with grave concern the attitude of the Indian port authorities regarding giving practical effect to the pledge of the Government of India of 1922 to Indianise the higher grades of services under the Port Trusts and urges upon the Government of India to take early steps to ensure that as earnest of their said pledge all future appointments in the non-technical services such as accounts, traffic, stores, etc., are rigidly restricted to Indians only, as also to take active steps with a view to train Indians for the technical services under the Port Trust."

#### 20.—Railway Board.

The following resolution put from the chair was passed unanimously.

"This Congress recommends to the Government that a representative of Indian trade and industry should be included on the Railway Board and steps should be taken to make such appointment as early as possible."

#### 21.—Railway Service.

Mr. M. K. Srinivasan moved the following resolution :—

"This Congress strongly opposes the recommendations contained in the Dickinson Committee's report regarding the importation of Chartered Accountants and Cash Accountants for service on the Indian Railways and urges that as Indians with suitable qualifications are available, they should be appointed to these posts."

#### 22.—Mining Concessions.

Mr. V. P. Lorlan moved the following resolution which was carried.

"This Congress is of opinion that time-expired concessions should be renewed as a rule in favour of original holders and ordinarily on the same terms; when, however, it appears to the Government that there are good grounds for enhancement of the Royalty the matter should be referred for report to a Board on which commercial interests should be adequately represented."

"This Congress is further of opinion that Government should not permit non-Indians to exploit the mineral resources of the country which are valuable and irreplaceable public assets."

## 23.—Disposal of Planting Areas.

Mr. N. Sen moved the following :

"This Congress recommends that Government lands available for plantation of rubber, tea and coffee should be disposed of only by public auction duly notified, restricted to Indian bidders only."

## 24.—Insurance Legislation.

Mr. V. C. Rangaswami Iyengar moved the next resolution recommending legislation suitable to regulate the business of Insurance companies.

He said that in India the unexplored field in this matter was vast. The legislation with regard to insurance was defective and required a great deal of re-modelling. With the pressure of public opinion the Government of India brought forward a Bill in 1925 but the public condemned that measure as unacceptable. The interests of indigenous insurance enterprise required to be safe-guarded. By legislation it should be made obligatory on foreign companies that a good portion of the revenue collected must be invested in securities fruitful and helpful to industries in India. The resolution was carried.

## 25.—Trade Marks Act.

Mr. C. Rajan moved the next resolution relating to an enactment of Trade Marks Act.

He said that in the absence of a Trade Mark Act, trade mark was unwittingly infringed by persons introducing a trade mark having no knowledge that similar trade mark was used by some other person in another part of the country. Wanton infringements or infringements out of ignorance resulted in litigation and undue dislocation of trade. The resolution was carried.

The following resolutions from the chair were passed :—

## 26.—Indianisation of Services.

This Congress recommends to the Government of India to take early steps for the speedy Indianisation of all higher appointments in all commercial departments with special reference to Port Trusts, Development and Improvement Trust, Imperial Bank of India, the Railways, Post and Telegraphs, Irrigation, Customs, Accounts, and Income-tax.

This Congress reiterates the urgent need of having Indians with trade experience as trade Representatives in the commercial centres of the world to look after the commercial and industrial interests of India.

This Congress represents to the Government of India that the conditions at present insisted upon for admission of Indian candidates to the Bengal Pilot service are not only more stringent than in the case of European candidates, but are in effect such as to virtually preclude Indians from admission to that service and in consequence the commitment of the Government to reserve a certain number of appointments for Indians becomes meaningless. Under the circumstances, this Congress urges upon the Government of India to adopt practical measures with a view to facilitate and expedite the Indianisation of the Bengal Pilot service.

## 27.—Reduction of Railway Freight for Soft Coke.

Mr. W. C. Banerjee moved the following resolution :—

This Congress urges on Government to effect at an early date a substantial reduction of railway freight on soft coke to enable consumers of different centres suffering from want of fuels to take to the use of soft coke for domestic purposes.

## 28.—Representation of Indian Commerce on Public Bodies.

Mr. Jamal Mahomed Saheb moved the following resolution, which was passed unanimously :—

That as the Indian commercial and industrial bodies are not given adequate representation on central and provincial legislature and public bodies this Congress urges on the Government to go into the matter with a view to provide such representation as would be in keeping with the importance of the interest concerned.

## 29.—Commercial Training.

Mr. T. V. Santanam moved the following resolution :—

This Congress deplores the lack of practical training in commerce and industry in the present system of education and invites the attention of Indian universities to the urgent need of it with a view to the development of business training in India.

## 30.—Female Labour in Mines.

Mr. W. C. Banerjee moved the following resolution :—

This Congress is of opinion that while Indian mine-owners are prepared to work the convention of the International Labour Conference regarding female labour in mines and the legislation that was recently enacted by the Government of India to put that convention into effect, the pace of eliminating female labour should not be too fast and urges that Government might begin with eliminating female labour in deep mines for the present allowing the same in the mines of depth not exceeding 300 feet from the surface and providing for elimination of this also gradually in the next ten years.

## 31.—Indian Coal Industry.

Mr. W. C. Banerjee moved the following resolution, the last on the agenda :

Having regard to the national importance of the coal industry this Congress recommends the Government of India to take adequate measures to protect and urge on the Railway Board that the programme of expansion of railway collieries should be modified so that at least a half of the total requirements of coal of the Indian railways may be met by purchases of Indian coal in the open market.

## The President's Closing Speech.

The President said that if his conduct in the chair had received the approval of the Congress he felt himself amply compensated. Many advantages were secured to the commercial and industrial interests of India by such Congresses as this and by the exchange of views afforded therein. The perfect unanimity which prevailed in this Congress in regard to questions affecting various parts of the country was a happy augury of the future united action of India to promote the vital interests of their motherland. He congratulated the delegates on the businesslike methods in which they conducted the proceedings and they had thus made his task the easiest possible. They had got through a tremendous amount of work and everything had gone on smoothly, harmoniously and in the best of spirits. There was nothing in the universe that could keep India in the present condition if they all presented a united front for the cause of their motherland and Indians were intellectually in no way inferior but were superior to the people of other races, and even in spite of handicaps they could give a very creditable account of themselves in competitive examination with foreigners. In conclusion, he pointed out that if only all Indians united together there was nothing on the face of the earth that could keep India from her just and legitimate rights.

The Congress then dissolved at 6 p.m.

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# The Indian Chambers of Commerce.

The annual meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce came off on December 31 at the Pachaiyappa's Hall, Madras, Sir Dinshaw Petit, President, presiding. There were about 25 members present which included Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah, Sir M. C. T. Muthiah Chettiar and Rao Bahadur C. Gopala Menon.

## President's Speech.

Sir Dinshaw Petit, President, made the following speech :—

Gentlemen,—I have much pleasure in proposing the adoption of the Annual Report of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce, which has already been circulated to you with the Accounts.

Before I proceed to comment on some of the outstanding topics of the official year of the Federation, which is closing to-day I feel it my duty to explain the procedure which has been adopted this year by our Committee with regard to the convening of the Session of the Industrial and Commercial Congress this year. When it met last time at Calcutta, the general impression was that the Commercial Congress as such would not be held next time but that the Annual Meeting of the Federation would serve the purpose, though the Rules had provided for convening a Commercial Congress if it was found necessary by the Executive Committee of the Federation. It was found, in my absence in Europe, by the Executive Committee of the Federation that it was advisable to hold a Session of the Commercial Congress at Madras in order that all the different Indian Chambers of Commerce and Commercial Associations could meet together on a common platform. As this was the first year of the existence of the Federation it was thought desirable to hold a Session at least this year. It was, thereupon, resolved to hold the Congress at Madras and our Madras friends, who were themselves eager to have such a session though it inflicted upon them an additional burden of work and worry, have made it successful by their efforts. The Commercial Congress has now ended and passed resolutions of very great importance to the commercial community. It was fortunate to have secured the services of such a capable and farsighted industrialist gentleman like Sir Ibrahim Rahimtulla for its President. It now remains for the Federation to do the needful with regard to those resolutions.

One word of personal explanation is also, I think, necessary. When I was offered the Presidentship of the Calcutta session of the Commercial Congress I hardly realised at first that I was being called upon to assume responsibilities of the office for one whole year. I was under the impression that they would end in three days. When I was called to undertake the responsibility for the whole year as President of the Federation, I explained to some of the members of the Committee that I might be obliged to go outside India for reasons of health. They very kindly pressed me to accept the office all the same. I was out of India for about six months and I feel that owing to my absence I was not able to put in as much work for the Federation as I deemed necessary. I crave, therefore your indulgence for any sins of omission you may find on my part,

## Membership.

The total number of Chambers and Commercial Associations which were represented at the Delhi session of the Congress was 20 and at the Calcutta session 24. You will find from the Report that 11 Chambers and 13 Associations have joined the Federation as members during the course of the year. This progress in membership during the first year of its existence is highly satisfactory. My satisfaction is based upon the fact that practically every important Indian Chamber of Commerce has joined the Federation in addition to several equally important Associations: and this, despite the fact that the subscriptions both for Chambers and Commercial Associations were rather high. None can now doubt that the Federation is the one organization fully representing All-Indian commercial interests. There are proposals before you for amending your constitution in the direction of reducing the rates of subscription and you, Gentlemen, who are representatives of different Chambers and Associations, will be in a position to decide after deliberation if any change is desirable or not. The Federation should consist of as many Indian Chambers of Commerce and Commercial Associations as possible and if you think that the present rate of subscription prevents some of them from joining, you would be well-advised in making such changes.

Your Committee held during the course of the year three meetings and one of these was devoted to considering in detail the Reserve Bank Bill. Your Committee addressed the Government with regard to the Bills of Lading question. The Government selected the Federation for the nomination of three representatives to serve on the Central Advisory Committee for Lighthouses.

## International Chamber of Commerce.

Another important step which has been taken by your Committee is that of joining the International Chamber of Commerce as an Organisation Member. This International Chamber is a body of great importance and has got international influence. It is this Chamber which has been responsible for preparing several interesting reports on economic problems which have been practically the basis for action by no less a body than the League of Nations. I hope that the membership of the International Chamber of Commerce will ring Indian trade and industries into closer and more living contact with International trade and industries.

The important questions which have arrested the attention of the Indian business world during the year that has just ended were three:—(1) the ratio question, (2) protection to the cotton textile industry, and (3) the Reserve Bank question.

## The Ratio Question and Cotton Industry.

So much has been written and spoken about the first question that even in my speech as President of the Calcutta Session of the Indian Industrial and Commercial Congress I desisted from offering any lengthy remarks. I shall only express my deepest regret that neither the Government nor even the Legislative Assembly could realise the stupendous importance of this question and settled it in a manner detrimental to the trade and industries of the country which had been already for several years past in the very *nadir* of depression. The overwhelming confidence of the Finance Member at the time of his putting the Ratio Bill through the Legislature had a rude



shock soon after when the exchange began to gag and had to be propped up by means, which we were assured would not be resorted to if the exchange was once established at 1s. 6d. The evil effects were to a large extent seen reflected on the cotton textile industry which had already been in a depressed state for sometime past and regarding which a special Tariff Board had been appointed by the Government. It was a cruel irony that while the Tariff Board was appointed to find out in what manner the interests of this industry could best be safeguarded the Central Legislature passed the legislation which gave a sort of 12 and half per cent bounty. The Government has been rightly blamed for carrying out such a legislation and I do not know what I should say about our own people who passed it despite the opposition of an important majority in the country consisting of agriculturists, industrialists and merchants. Not only this, but even the mild and halting report of the majority of the Tariff Board was not accepted by the Government and the textile industry had to rest satisfied with merely a five per cent duty on the imports of foreign yarn. Representative Associations of the textile industry as also different leading Chambers have spoken with no uncertain voice regarding the very inadequate relief granted to this industry by the Government. I hope that the agitation for a further protection to the textile industry will be continued, till adequate relief has been obtained.

#### The Reserve Bank Bill.

The third question, unlike the others, is still a live one. The Reserve Bank Bill was introduced in the Legislature at the Delhi Session and referred to a Select Committee of both the Houses. This Committee recommended that it should be a State Bank and that the Directors must be chosen partly from the Legislature and partly from commercial bodies. It is now common knowledge that just at the most important stage of the Bill during its course through the Simla Session, the Secretary of State intervened and put a stop for the time being to any further progress in the proceedings. Now whatever be our individual view about the constitution of the Reserve Bank we cannot but all agree in principle in protesting against this sort of interference. This is one more instance to show how India cannot thrive as long as the financial reins are in hands dependent upon interests outside India. It is most likely that the Reserve Bank legislation will be brought forward before the Indian Legislature at the forthcoming Delhi Session. It is still in the laps of Gods as to what form this legislation will ultimately take. It is probable, however, that the compromise scheme known as the stockholders' scheme will now be brought forward but the Government will revert back to the shareholders' scheme. The Committee of the Federation did not send out any representation to the Government with regard to this question as they could not make one in the time given to them.

With these words, Gentlemen, I propose the adoption of the Report and Accounts which have already been circulated.

#### Election of Office-Bearers.

After the annual report was read by the Secretary, Mr. J. K. Mehta, was adopted, the election of office-bearers for the new year was proceeded with and the meeting elected Sir Purshotamadas Thakurdas (President), Mr. G. D. Birla, (Vice-President), Sir Dinshaw Petit, Sir M. C. T. Muthiah Chettiar, Mr. Jamal Mahomed Sait, Mr. Walchand Hirachand, Mr. Tyabjee,

Mr. Fakirjee Cowasjee, Mr. Vikramajit Sing, Mr. Abdul Kudus, Mr. W. C. Bannerjee, Mr. B. F. Madan and five others as members.

Sir M. C. T. Muthiah Chettiar then proposed a hearty vote of thanks which terminated the meeting.

### The Annual Report for 1927.

At the fourth session of the Indian Industrial and Commercial Congress held at Calcutta in December 1926 was laid the foundation of the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce. The Congress appointed a provisional Executive Committee consisting of a large number of influential businessmen.

In October 1926, the Secretary of the London Chamber of Commerce forwarded to Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas a letter addressed by them to some of the Chambers in India in support of the adoption of a Uniform Bill of Lading for Eastern trade. The office prepared an exhaustive note on the history of the whole question for the use of the Committee, the question of the advisability of introducing a uniform, simple and intelligent form of Bill of Lading. The committee at their meeting held on 5th May 1927 considered the whole question in the views expressed by the various bodies and approval of the principle of having a uniform, simple and intelligent form of Bill of Lading and the Committee decided to write to the Government of India enquiring why the shipping companies were allowed to have their own form, even after the passing of the Indian Carriage of Goods by Sea Act of 1925. The Government of India have already been approached on this point but it will be sometime before the Government are in the position to move in the matter.

The Committee considered a letter addressed by Sir Arthur Balfour, acting President of the international Chamber of Commerce and decided that the Federation should join the International Chamber of Commerce and that the President, Sir Dinshaw Petit, and Mr. G. D. Birla, should decide in consultation with the authorities of the International Chamber of Commerce the form of the membership of the Federation. The President, Sir Dinshaw Petit and Mr. G. D. Birla suggested that the Federation should join that organisation as an Organisation member.

The Committee considered the personnel of the Indian delegation appointed by the Government of India to attend the International Economic Conference and decided to send a cable to the President and officers of the International Economic Conference protesting against the inadequate and non-representative character of the personnel. A cable was accordingly despatched to the President, International Economic Conference. While acknowledging the receipt of the cable, the Secretary General of the League of Nations points out "that the question of the choice of the members by different Governments is one which does not fall within the competence of the Conference or its officers."

At the instance of some of the members the question of publishing a Year Book of the Federation came up for consideration and the Committee approved of the idea of publishing a Year Book and it was agreed that the materials should be collected during the present year. A list of commercial institutions in the country with their aims and objects is being prepared and is nearing completion. It is proposed to include in this book as complete as possible a list of Indian Merchants abroad.

The Committee considered clause by clause the Reserve Bank Bill at their meeting held in May in Bombay and arrived at certain conclusions which were embodied in a provisional draft to all the members of the Committee for the expression of their views thereon, but the views of some of the members were received after the Select Committee of the Central Legislatures started its labours and hence it was not possible to send any views from the Federation in the time indicated.

The Committee received a letter from the Secretary, Commerce Department of the Government of India inviting the Federation to nominate three representatives of Indian Commerce to serve as members of the Central Advisory Committee nominated the following three gentlemen to represent them on the said Committee.

The Committee appointed Messrs. Chandabhooy and Jasoobhooy, Bombay as their Honorary Auditors for the year 1927.

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# The Associated Chambers of Commerce.

*CALCUTTA—19TH DECEMBER 1927.*

The Annual Conference of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India and Ceylon was held at Calcutta on the 19th December. Mr. Eddis, who presided over the Conference in asking His Excellency the Governor to open the conference said :—

In extending a welcome to those who are here to-day may I refer to the absence of two notable representatives, who have been specially faithful to us in their annual attendances? I refer to Sir Charles Innes and to Sir Basil Blackett. In respect to Sir Charles Innes, need I do more than offer our most sincere congratulations to Burma? Sir Charles Innes as the Governor of Burma is still in harness. Sir Basil Blackett, on the other hand, leaves the service of India in three-and-a-half months' time, and it is right that we should put on record our admiration of the skill and courage with which he has fought India's financial battles, with one single aim in view, namely, to give the country a sound and stable financial system. His work is not complete. But, whether or not he is able, in the short time remaining, to complete his task to his own full satisfaction, he has deserved well of India, and has earned our respect and gratitude.

I do not know, Sir, if you have found time to look at our agenda ; but, if so, you may have noticed with surprise the absence of any reference to what has been one of the most important subjects affecting trade and commerce discussed in the course of the year. I refer to the question of the Reserve Bank. I might perhaps explain that a resolution on this subject was drafted and appeared on our original agenda ; but, in the interval, Sir Basil Blackett proceeded to London to discuss the question there ; and in the circumstances, the Chamber which was to move the resolution, considering that a discussion on the subject at the present stage might be ill-timed, decided to withdraw it.

Another point of importance to everyone in India is the decision to proceed forthwith with the investigation of the political progress made by India since the introduction of the Reforms eight years ago. This decision was followed by the appointment of the Statutory Commission, the constitution of which has been the subject of much criticism. But the Associated Chambers, as an Association, have seen no reason to commit themselves to an expression of opinion upon the constitution of the Commission. Recommendations of this Commission will however be of vital importance to all interests in India, including those of commerce and industry. And the interests we represent will readily render what assistance they can to the Commission in their work, and will, no doubt, take the opportunity in due time of expressing an opinion upon the final recommendations submitted.

Here I would stop except that I feel it necessary to make some reference to a subject which is causing many of us a considerable amount of anxious thought. In the past, the relation between Capital and Labour has been frequently dealt with at these meetings. But, for the greater part of this year, we have fortunately been largely free from labour trouble. Unfortunately, however, the recent dispute between the Bengal-Nagpur Railway and a section of its employees, has been settled as a result of the intervention of the Government of India, in a way which, we fear, will not tend to encourage peace in industry, but will, on the other hand, give encouragement to the agitator. The question will be discussed in the course of our proceedings in connection with a resolution dealing with Government intervention in industrial disputes. I will not, therefore, detain you now with a longer reference to the subject.

**Sir Stanley Jackson's Speech.**

His Excellency the Governor of Bengal addressing the Associated Chambers of Commerce said :—

A gathering, such as this, must naturally be regarded as of great importance, and your deliberations and decisions will be watched with much interest. The Chambers of India are endowed, and rightly so, with much influence, and their views and recommendation on questions affecting the trade and commerce of the Indian Empire command respect. The Chambers of Commerce of various provinces are enabled, through representation in the various Provincial Legislative Councils, and also in the Indian Legislature to take a direct part in the administration of Government. The provincial Governments have every reason to be grateful to those who give their valuable time and services in the interest of the country in these various assemblies; and the assistance of their experience and knowledge of commercial life is of exceptional value to those legislatures.

I have studied your agenda, and I observe that the subjects to be dealt with at this annual meeting are practically all matters appertaining to the sphere of the Central Government, rather than of Local Governments. I do not propose to ask your attention to purely local matters, as you have enough in your agenda to occupy your whole time. Nevertheless, the Local Government are deeply interested in such central subjects as Commerce, Marine, Income-tax, etc., about which they are consulted by the Central Government.

I note the first resolution on your agenda relates to the subject of Income-tax. On this subject perhaps, I need only say that we, in Bengal, would like to participate in a share of what is paid by the commercial and industrial interests in this presidency. We feel that, as an industrial province, under the allocation of central and provincial finance, we are entitled to a larger share of the proceeds derived from industrial development in this presidency.

Another matter, about which our opinion was asked during the year was in respect to the draft regulations under the Indian Mines Act, prohibiting the employment of women in mines. The principle of the abolition of female labour underground was accepted by the Government of Bengal several years ago, but we consider that the date proposed by the Government of India, namely 1st of July, 1929 does not give sufficient opportunity to the interests concerned to adjust themselves to the new condition.

The Government of such an industrial presidency as Bengal must naturally give close attention to the problems connected with Labour, and it is gratifying to note that since 1921, there has been a marked improvement in the relations between Capital and Labour. It is our duty to keep in close touch with labour organisations, and watch the relationship between employers and employees, and also to scrutinise carefully any new labour proposals coming from the Government of India. A new legislation has been passed, including the Workmen's Compensation Act, which appears to be functioning satisfactorily, and an Indian Trade Union Act based largely on the Trade Union legislation in Great Britain, has been introduced. This latter Act, passed in 1926, came into effect from this year, and now this presidency has a Registrar of Trade Unions, to guide, direct and to a certain degree, control the growth of the trade union movement. The aim of the Act is, by the adoption of the machinery of collective bargaining, to provide a means of avoiding strikes. This seems necessary in view of the fact that in Bengal, during the year 1926-27, the number of recorded strikes was 58, involving an estimated loss of about one and quarter million working days. The relationship between Capital and Labour in India is a subject which must be of exceptional interest to the business communities. At this moment great endeavours are being made to organise labour, the success of which must depend on the methods adopted in creating these organisations. There is a natural anxiety that these organisations shall be based upon a belief that goodwill is the best foundation and not distrust and suspicion. The tendency of some leaders to produce a feeling of hostility between the employers and employees is to be deprecated. Those who do that, are not animated with any desire to reach the goal by peaceful methods.

It will be necessary for those who lead Labour in this country to study the real position in England to-day, and not to rely too much upon the perfervid oratory of the Trade Union organisers, who appear to be out of touch with the new spirit which has arisen in England. For years, England has suffered from innumerable and disastrous stoppages, the experience of which has shown that the results obtained through strikes and lockouts are ruinous and calamitous to all concerned. No immediate or lasting benefit is accrued, but rancour and bad feeling are engendered. A new movement has been started in England, which looks like succeeding and which would make the weapons of strikers and lockouts obsolete. In their place, a machinery will be established under which it should be possible, with reasonable goodwill, to settle disputes by amicable agreement.

Sir, in your opening remarks, you referred to the intervention of the Government in industrial disputes. I can quite appreciate the feeling of a body of businessmen in respect to this question. And perhaps, you are quite right to take advantage of the presence of the Hon'ble the Member for Commerce at this conference to discuss it. In England, the Government is averse to intervening in any industrial disputes unless forced to do so in the interests of the State. I think the same policy applies in India. Intervention by the Government in industrial disputes should be only as a last resort. It must always be difficult to determine how and when Government intervention should be made.

You, Sir, also referred to the Statutory Commission which is coming to India shortly. I like you, do not intend to dwell upon their visit to-day. You no doubt appreciate, as you must do, the necessity of the Commission receiving all possible assistance from the business and commercial communities in India. I feel quite sure that this assistance will be accorded.

## Proceedings and Resolutions.

### 1.—Discussion on Income-Tax Act.

After the Governor's address Mr. F. Clayton of the Karachi Chamber, moved the following resolution :—

"That this Association is opposed to the recommendation of the Indian Taxation Enquiry Committee for the raising of income-tax and reducing the limit for super-tax. In the opinion of the Association, these direct taxes are already too high owing to their enhancement in War time, and the scale should not be further steepened, until all other means of increasing the revenue have been exhausted. He referred to the Taxation Enquiry Committee's proposals and said that they did not consider it desirable to increase the maximum rates especially in view of the fact that these were being reduced in England. But what they did consider equitable was a moderate increase in the intermediate scales. They therefore, suggested that the 9 pies rate should apply to incomes from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 15,000, that the 12 pies rate should apply to incomes from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 25,000, and that the 16 pies' rate should apply from Rs. 25,000 onwards. They also proposed making Rs. 30,000 the limit for super-tax, with a new rate of 6 pies on the first Rs. 20,000 or part thereof in excess of that sum. His Chamber felt strongly that some of the many other means at the Government's disposal of providing additional revenue, should be fully explored, and fully tapped before an additional burden of this nature was thrown upon the public.

Sir Alexander Murray raised the question of the reduction of income-tax.

Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra pointed out that the Government of India had at present no intention of proceeding with that particular recommendation of the Taxation Enquiry Committee. If the Government desired to take action on that recommendation they would no doubt give the fullest consideration to the views of the Karachi Chamber and the views of other Chambers of Commerce. A regards Sir Alexander Murray's remarks he said that Sir Alexander knew that it would be years before they would possibly reach that stage. If a portion of these taxes went to the local government as suggested by His Excellency the Governor, the central government must find some other means of making good that shortage. The resolution was carried.

## 2.—Secrecy of Income-Tax Returns.

Mr. F. Clayton of the Karachi Chamber moved: "This Association records its strong disapproval of the suggestion of the Indian Taxation Enquiry Committee that section 54 of the Indian Income-tax Act regarding secrecy, might be amended so as to permit income-tax officers to issue to local authorities lists of persons assessable to local profession taxes." In the opinion of their Association, the secrecy of the income-tax returns is of paramount importance, and should be strictly preserved. He said that either this meeting should uphold the principle of secrecy as far as possible in matters relating to the assessment of individuals under the income-tax Act, or it must be prepared to accept the thin end of the wedge towards the destruction of that principle. In the opinion of his chamber any departure from the strict secrecy, afforded by section 54 of the Indian Income-tax Act, was most strongly to be deprecated. It was in line with the practice in England and should be preserved with the utmost jealousy. Any departure from secrecy was liable to weaken the respect for the provisions of section 54 generally, and was accordingly liable to lead to other similar departures in the future.

Mr. G. L. Winterbotham (Bombay Chamber) supported the resolution.

Sir Bupendra Nath Mitra said that this particular suggestion of the Indian Taxation Enquiry Committee was referred to the local Governments for their opinion about 18 months ago. The opinions of all the local Governments had not yet reached the Government of India and the latter had not been able to come to any final conclusion. One of the local Governments were of opinion that the secrecy agreement had been overstated. The views of the Associated Chambers of Commerce would receive the attention of the Government of India before any action was taken in the matter.

The resolution was unanimously accepted.

## 3.—Liability of Non-Residents.

Mr. C. E. Wood (Madras Chamber) moved: "With reference to Section 7 sub-section (1) (c) of the Indian Income-Tax (Amendment Bill) No 45 of 1926, this Association recommends to the Government that the amendment or the Act should follow the suggestions in para 6 of the Indian Taxation Enquiry Committee's report. He said that they were particularly concerned with section 42 (1) of the Act under which a non-resident was taxable in the name of his agent in India in regard to all profits or gains accruing or arising directly or indirectly through or from any business connection or property in British India.

The object of the proposed amendment was to provide against a non-resident, working through an agent, so arranging his prices to his Indian agent that the bulk of the profit might accrue at the non-resident's place of business outside India, and thereby be free of Indian tax.

Mr. Winterbotham (Bombay Chamber) said that the Punjab Chamber of Commerce received a letter from the Central Board of Revenue to the effect, that the basic principle of the Indian Income-tax (Amendment) Bill was as much applicable to the profits of non residents, and that it was not intended to introduce any innovation.

Sir B. N. Mitra said that the position of the Government of India in this matter was perfectly simple. This particular Bill had already been referred to a Select Committee and was therefore subjudice. The representative of the Associated Chambers of Commerce would be able to place before the Committee, the views of the Associated Chamber of Commerce. If, however, he was not on the Select Committee, he would be able to place his case before the whole House, and try to persuade them to accept the views placed before the Conference. The Government of India would have to listen to what the other members of the Select Committee had got to say on the question, before they could come to any conclusion with regard to any final action they desired to take.

Sir Alexandra Murray, in supporting the resolution, pointed out that there was no change whatever in the statutory law between the Acts of 1919 and 1920.

The resolution was carried.

Mr. C. E. Wood of the Madras Chamber, moved "This Association requests the Government to amend Section 50 of the Income-tax Act 1922, so as to provide for an extension the period during which a refund may be allowed where delay has occurred in the United Kingdom."

The resolution, he said, was the outcome of a reference to the Madras High Court by the Commissioner of Income-tax, Madras, at the request of an assessee.

Sir B. N. Mitra said that no change in the existing Act was necessary.

The resolution was carried.

#### 4.—Provident Fund Benefits.

Sir John Bell (Bengal Chamber) moved the following resolution: "This Association urges upon the Government of India to recognise the inequity that exists between the treatment of Government employees and the employees of firms, companies and associations, with reference to the benefits they receive from provident funds; and recommends that the Provident Funds Act of 1925 be amended so as to extend its provisions to all properly constituted provident funds."

Moving the resolution, Sir John said: "My feeling is that the Government have never given any adequate answer to the demand of the mercantile community that employees of private firms should receive the same advantages with regard to provident funds benefits as are enjoyed by the employees of Government. The only objections offered by the Government, so far, have been three in number. In the first place they have told us that the change embodied in the resolution would necessitate various safeguards with regard to the registration or admission of firms, etc., to the privileges of the Act. In the second place, they say it would necessitate the setting up of a special authority for this purpose. In the third place, they say it would require the amendment of the provisions of the Procedure Code, as restrictions on the rights of creditors would be involved. As I said at Cawnpore, I see no difficulty whatever in amending the law in order to meet these objections; and more particularly so, when it is remembered that no department of the Government of India have shown themselves so expert in the amending of the existing Acts as the Finance Department. These objections scarcely seem tenable, when it is remembered that they have introduced seven Acts amending the Income-tax Act of 1922, and that they introduce rules which have the effect of altering the meaning of the Act almost every month. I consider that it is imperative that the Government should take immediate action with a view to doing what is only bare justice to the employees of private firms and companies, whose only provision for old age, in many cases, is the amount they receive from their provident funds, and with a view to removing the impression that the Government desires to grant privileges to their own employees, which they withhold from the employees of private firms and companies."

Mr. G. L. Winterbotham of the Bombay Chamber said that his Chamber felt that the Government should follow the lines indicated by Sir Basil Blackett. He suggested that the resolution should be so amended as to provide for the appointment of a committee on which this association should be represented to examine all the facts before coming to a conclusion on the major point.

Sir B. N. Mitra said that the position of the Government of India in regard to this particular measure, was that they had resumed actual consideration of the proposal which was adopted by the Associated Chambers of Commerce at its meeting at Cawnpore. They were for including certain provisions to prevent any possible evasion of the proposed enactment because the actual extension of the Provident Fund Act to provident funds in business firms, might cause a great deal of evasion of income-tax. The Government of India were in correspondence with Provincial Governments, and there the matter rested.

The resolution was carried.

#### 5.—Suggestion for Board of Referees.

Sir John Bell (Bengal Chamber) moved: "This Association, being apprehensive of the possible effect on the legitimate operations of bona fide business firms and companies, of the legislation proposed in the Indian Income-tax Amendment Bill, 1927, desires to record its opinion (a) that it is imperative there should be introduced in the new Section 23-A, which Clause 4 of the Bill proposes

to add to the Indian Income-tax Act of 1922, making it indisputably clear that the application of the section shall be restricted to cases where an attempt has been made to evade taxation and (b) that decision as to whether or not there has been an intention to evade taxation shall lie not with the income-tax officer but with a board of referees, consisting of an equal number of officials and non-officials, with a non-official chairman." He said that the Bengal Chamber desired to make it clear that they had no wish to support the continuation of a system which would make it possible for persons to evade paying income-tax who were justly liable to pay it. In all their communications with the Government the Chamber had made this point clear. But they considered it essential that persons, firms and companies that were dealing honestly with the income-tax authorities should not be harassed by the provisions of any bill introduced for the purpose of securing payment of income-tax from those who were evading it.

Mr. Winterbotham (Bombay Chamber), while in full sympathy with the desire of the Government to secure payment of taxes, said that the legislation as it stood, was extremely dangerous to the interests of private companies. He preferred that the proposed legislation so far as companies were concerned, should not be proceeded with because there were insuperable difficulties that stood in the way. He entirely agreed with the mover of the resolution that every safe-guard possible should be included in this bill to prevent Government interference with the legitimate working of private companies. He supported the first part of the resolution, which appeared to him to be admirable. As for the second part, their Chamber was unable to support the proposal for a board of referees. Boards of referees appeared to them to be impracticable and undesirable. He suggested an amendment that board of referees should be optional.

Mr. A. L. Carnege (Upper India Chamber) supported the views of the Bombay Chamber.

Sir B. N. Mitra said that this matter was also sub-judice. The bill had been referred to a select committee. It would be the function of the representatives of the Associated Chambers of Commerce in the Select Committee or in the Legislative Assembly, to express the views of the Chamber. The Government at this stage would not commit itself in any way in the matter.

The motion was carried with an amendment in the second part of the resolution to the effect that the decision as to whether or not there had been an intention to evade taxation should rest with the High Court or at the option of the assessee, with a board of referees consisting of an equal number of officials and non-officials with a non-official chairman.

#### 6.—Terminal Taxes.

Mr. F. Clayton (Karachi Chamber) moved: "This Association urges upon the Government the necessity of expediting orders against the continuous tendency of municipalities to increase and expand terminal taxes which were unconditionally condemned by the Indian Taxation Enquiry Committee as offending against all principles of taxation."

Sir B. N. Mitra pointed out that the Indian Taxation Enquiry Committee had recommended that the resources of local bodies should be increased in some directions.

Mr. P. Mukerjee (Punjab Chamber) regretted that he could not support the resolution. Earlier in the day, Mr. Clayton had enunciated the principle that indirect taxation was preferable to direct taxation. He did not understand how municipalities up-country were going to find revenue. He pointed out that octroi had to be replaced by terminal tax with advantage in some of the cities in the Punjab. He could not therefore be opposed to extension of terminal tax.

The resolution was carried. The Conference was then adjourned till next day.

#### CALCUTTA—20TH DECEMBER 1927.

#### 7.—Labour and Arbitration.

On this day Mr. G. W. Chambers (Madras) moved a resolution that:—

"In view of the growing tendency of representatives of Indian labour to



advocate increased State control of relationships between capital and labour, this Association desires explicitly to affirm that compulsory arbitration in industrial disputes is entirely wrong in principle and an unwarranted encroachment on the legally established status of employers. The question of compulsory settlement of strikes in public utility services is not included in the resolution."

Sir John BELL (Bengal) said it would be impossible to pass over this subject without making some reference to the feeling of alarm that had been created by the recent settlement, as a result of the direct intervention of Government, in what was known as the Kharagpur Workshops dispute. He criticised at length the Government of India's last communique on the subject and asked: "What is the position at the end of it all? Men who have refused to work are in the same position as if they had given their employer the loyal service to which the payment of their wages entitled him. This cannot but give encouragement to labour agitators who make it their business to create trouble between employers and employees, and who will regard the result of this strike as a triumph for their methods. The inevitable result must be the multiplication of labour disputes."

Sir B. N. MITRA said the Government of India had decided first to place in the Statute Book the Trade Union Bill before proceeding further with the Trades Disputes Bill. The latter Bill was now undergoing revision with reference to the various opinions which were sent up to the Government of India on it. It was not possible at this stage to state what form the modified Bill would take, or when the Government of India would decide to introduce it in the Legislative Assembly.

The provision to which exception was taken by certain Chambers of Commerce was the one empowering, but not compelling, the Government, whenever any trade dispute arose, to refer it to a Dispute Board, not merely for the purpose of investigating but also for intervening to bring about a settlement. He admitted the word "settlement" in the provision of the old Bill was a bit unfortunate, but there was the word "may" in it. There was no compulsion. In any case, it did not compel the Government to refer any great dispute to the Disputes Board. That would involve compulsory arbitration.

It was not his intention, the Hon. Member said, to commit the Government of India in any way in the matter. But there was a certain amount of misapprehension about the original Draft Bill. Although the Government said that they did not want compulsory arbitration the Draft Bill itself savoured of it. It was quite possible, and indeed probable, that as a result of the various criticisms which they had received on their original Draft Bill, the Bill might be modified in certain respects, and when it would be placed before the Indian Legislature they would have the fullest opportunity of discussing all the provisions in the Bill.

Proceeding, Sir B. N. Mitra said that Sir John Bell incidentally referred to the recent Kharagpur incident. The position of the Government in that particular case had been brought out in the Government communique referred to by Sir John Bell. It was apparent from the communique that the Government did not accept that these particular labourers were entitled to full pay during the period they were away from work, nor did they suggest anything which might be construed as conveying an indication that the payment of full wages for the period they stopped work was to be followed as a precedent. The Government explained that there were peculiar features in this case which made it necessary for the Government to concede the grant of full pay as a special case.

Sir George RAINY, whose intervention in the Kharagpur dispute brought about the settlement, recalled at length the circumstances which led to the Government of India's intervention, and said Government felt strongly that a position had arisen in which only one course was open to them. The paramount consideration was that it should be impossible for anyone to say that in their dealings with this matter the Government of India had been guilty of a breach of faith. For that reason, after consultation with the railway company, they announced the terms on which the men actually returned to work.

"I should make it as clear as I possibly can that the decision of the Government of India was influenced by the consideration I have mentioned and by that

consideration only. They were fully conscious of the dangers but they held they were outweighed by the necessity, as it seemed to them, of avoiding any appearance of breach of faith."

Concluding, Sir George declared: "The question at issue is the grant of full pay for a period during which the men have refused to work. The Government of India are fully conscious of the dangers which may arise if the general impression is created that a refusal to work will not be followed by the natural and obvious consequences. Their view is that the principle that work and pay should go together is entirely sound and is not indeed seriously in dispute, and in view of what has occurred at Kharagpur it will be all the more necessary in future to refuse any concessions which would tend to confirm any misapprehension that may already exist. The resolution was carried.

#### 8.—Banking in India.

Mr. H. C. Edmondson, Bengal Chamber, moved that.

"This Association urges on the Government the advisability of holding, at an early date, an examination into the banking in India, with a view to steps being taken to regulate banks, and banking business in this country."

He said that they had all heard a great deal lately about developing the banking habit. It was, however, very hard to teach this habit unless there was a feeling of confidence among the pupils whom they desired to teach.

It was impossible to pretend that confidence existed. While he was prepared to admit that the deposits of the principal Indian Joint Stock Banks had, during the last 15 years, greatly increased and that this tended to show that with their encouragement the banking habit could be developed, he would say that the number of pitfalls, into which a depositor could fall, were stupendous and one had only to watch the issue of any commercial paper to see the number of small banks which were registered each month.

Mr. P. MUKERJEE, Punjab Chamber, expressed his regret that he was unable to second his support to the resolution as it stood. He suggested the following amendment:

"This Association urges on the Government the advisability of holding, at an early date, an examination into banking in India, with a view to steps being taken to improve and expand, if necessary, and to regulate and control banks, and banking business, in this country."

Speaking in support of the resolution Sir Leslie HUDSON, of the Bombay Chamber, said that it was most important that the legislation regulating banks and banking business in India should be introduced, as early as possible, provided satisfactory legislation could be obtained. Small institutions calling themselves banks had been springing up all over the country in recent times, at a rate that was not generally realised. Too often they were inaugurated in the private interests of promoters for the collection of deposits from unsuspecting persons for employment in their business, or for other purposes.

Sir B. N. MITRA said that the Government was of the opinion that it was premature, at the movement, to hold such an inquiry as the nature of such an inquiry was such that the Government did not want to arrive at premature conclusions.

It might be desirable to appoint either one or two experts separately, or in conjunction, to examine the subject or to appoint something in the nature of a committee, or even to appoint a committee which was not in itself expert.

The amendment was carried.

#### 9.—Import Duty Assessment.

Mr. H. F. Bateman, Bengal Chamber, then moved that:—

"This Association is of opinion that effect should be given, at an early date, to the recommendation of the Indian Taxation Inquiry Committee for alterations to the system of assessment of import duty, under section 30(A) of the Sea Customs Act, so as to secure that the basis of assessment will normally be by invoice price, plus cost of freight."

## 10.—Piecegoods Admixtures.

Sir Leslie Hudson (Bombay) moved that :

"In order to do away with the present complicated method of calculating for purposes of assessment to duty the percentage of more highly taxed material contained in fabric, this Association recommends to the Government of India that the import duty on all piecegoods containing an admixture of artificial silk and cotton should be levied at a rate of 11 per cent. ad-valorem. Similarly, the import duty on admixtures of wool and artificial silk, or wool and cotton, should be 15 per cent. and on silk admixtures 20 per cent." The resolution was carried.

## 11.—Tariff Schedule Changes.

"This Association records its disapproval of the action of the Government of India in making changes in the headings of the Import Tariff Schedule without previously consulting importers likely to be affected by such changes, and recommends that in future when changes in tariff headings are under contemplation Chambers Commerce and other bodies interested should be consulted by the Central Government before such changes are brought into effect."

## 12.—Insolvency Act Working.

Mr. J. G. Ryan (Upper India) moved :—

"This Association considers that opinions recently elicited from various Chambers of Commerce in regard to the working of the Provincial Insolvency Act have shown conclusively the need for amendment, not only of the Provincial Act but also of the Presidency Town Insolvency Act. The Association accordingly recommends to Government that early steps be taken in the direction of amending and unifying the law of insolvency in India, particularly with a view to improving the existing procedure regarding the appointment and control of official receivers or assignees."

He emphasised that the main complaint centred round the subject of the receiver. The most important recommendation of the Civil Justice Committee was that official receivers should be supervised by Government in the same way as the Board of Trade supervised the work of the official receiver in England. The resolution urged not only the amendment but a modification of the law of insolvency in India. The resolution was carried.

## 31.—Documents as Evidence.

Sir Leslie Hudson (Bombay) moved that :

"This Association is of opinion (1) that the law of evidence should be so amended that such commercial documents as are accepted as *prima facie* correct in commercial circles may be admitted in evidence without formal proof ; (2) that this amendment be effected by the introduction of a separate Act on the analogy of the Bankers' Books Evidence Act 1891 (XVIII of 1891), which should contain *inter alia* a provision by which the Court can take evidence whether any particular document is, by the custom of merchants in a particular trade or locality, recognised as proof of the facts contained in it ; (3) that the term commercial documents be held to include (A) documents which are universally recognised amongst merchants as proof of particular facts and which may be declared by notification to be 'commercial documents,' (B) such documents as may be shown in evidence taken in accordance with (2) to be recognised by the custom of merchants in a particular trade or locality

as proof of facts contained in them, (C) such documents as the parties have by agreement undertaken to accept."

Sir John Bell (Bengal) moved as an amendment that para 2 of the resolution be omitted altogether and that for sub-clause (B) of para (3) the following be substituted: (A) such documents as are certified by any Chamber of Commerce prescribed for the purpose in "The Gazette of India."

The amended resolution was carried.

#### 14.—Loading of Vessels.

Mr. A. R. Leishman (Chittagong) moved :—

"This Association deprecates the notification issued by the Government of India, against the advice of local knowledge and interests, reducing the period in which vessels may load to Indian summer marks in Indian waters, and requests that it be withdrawn." The resolution was carried.

#### 15.—Trunk Line Telephones.

Mr. W. Roberts (Northern India) moved that :—

"This Association is of opinion that the development of the use of the trunk line telephone service is seriously hampered by the delay frequently experienced in getting calls put through, and requests Government to take measures to remedy this difficulty and render the trunk lines a dependable service to business houses."

Mr. H. A. Sams, Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, said that so far as the Telephone Branch of his Department was concerned, the Government official was as much a subscriber as any firm or private individual. It was not a fact that Government trunk calls got priority over private calls. The only exception was in the case of "clear the line" calls, which could only be sent by a few officials. The speaker assured the Conference that he should have the matter regarding delay carefully investigated and would try his best to effect an improvement. The resolution was carried.

#### 16.—Mining Development.

Mr. G. L. Winterbotham (Bombay and Burma) moved that :

"This Association is of opinion that any proposal to secure additional revenue from time-expired mining concessions by disposing of them under the system of auction or tender than is at present derived from them is contrary to the best interests of the country ; (b) that this Association views with apprehension the apparent tendency in recent Government proposals to look upon the mineral development of India as a suitable object for increased taxation and to withhold from it the fundamental support necessary for all capital investment in mining ventures, namely, security of tenure. In support, therefore, of the unanimously expressed views of the Chambers of Commerce throughout India, this Association resolves to recommend to Government that the policy with respect to minerals which will bring the greatest ultimate benefit to India lies in attracting capital for the development of the mineral resources of the country by guaranteeing security of tenure to concession holders and by establishing the cost of mineral concessions and rates of royalty on minerals at a nominal figure."

The resolution was carried.

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# India in the Brussels Congress.

The following is the report of the International Congress against imperialism held at Brussels from the 10th to the 15th February 1927 and submitted by Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru to the All-India Congress Committee :—

In compliance with the resolution of the National Congress passed at Gauhati, appointing me their representative at the International Congress against Imperialism, I had the honour to attend the sessions of this International Congress and to take part in its proceedings.

The Brussels Congress, regarded from any point of view, was an event of first class importance and it is likely to have far-reaching results. The English press, so far as I am aware, has given little or no publicity to it, with the exception of some labour organs. The continental press gave some more publicity, but even here more or less satisfactory reports were confined to the labour papers. This was not surprising as it is the deliberate policy of the big capitalist newspapers in the West to suppress and ignore such happenings. Quite a large number of press correspondents, including representatives of some important news agencies, were present at the public sessions of the Congress, but either their messages were suppressed or they themselves did not send any proper reports.

The success and the representative character of the Congress reflect great credit on the organisers. It is no easy task to hold the first sessions of any Congress or to start a new organisation. The task becomes far more difficult if the Congress or organisation is meant to be international with world-wide ramifications. But no amount of organisation could have made the Brussels Congress the success it undoubtedly was if it had not supplied a real want. Any one present at the Congress could not help thinking that the Congress was but the outward symbol of the intense desire for mutual co-operation which had taken possession of the oppressed and the exploited all over the world. The idea of the Congress once started was eagerly welcomed and people came long distances to attend it. Many of the delegates from South America and South Africa had, I am told, to raise subscriptions, to which even the poor contributed, to enable them to come to Brussels. This was an impressive fact and it naturally made one feel that whatever the future of the organisation which the Brussels Congress has created might be, some such international organisation is bound to come in the near future.

A popular international Congress has seldom a very representative character, but under the circumstances, the Brussels Congress can be considered to be very representative both of the countries being exploited and oppressed by others and of workers' organisations. The list of organisations and delegates which I attach to this report will give some idea of the representative character of the Congress. This list is not quite correct as some people who are mentioned did not come and others who are not mentioned came. The strongest delegation was that of China, the head of the delegation being a member of the Executive of the Kuo Min T'ang, the Chinese National Party, which controls the National Government. Both the northern and southern national armies sent one of their generals, and the Chinese labour organisations had several delegates. There were a number of Indians present representing students or local organisations in Europe, but although some of them were very able and helpful, they could hardly be said to represent India. The fact, however, that the Indian National Congress was officially represented made the Indian representation important and weighty, in spite of failings of the representative in question. Egypt, Persia, Syria, the Dutch East Indies, Annam, Korea, Morocco, French North Africa (both Arab and Negro), South Africa (both Negro and White labour), United States (Negroes and White representatives of the minority movements), Mexico and the States of Central and South America, were some of the countries represented. The European countries sent labours, many of them famous in the ranks of socialism. England sent a number of leaders of the left wing of the labour movement, among them being George Lansbury, M. P., Vice-Chairman of the Labour Party, A. Fenner Brockway, Secretary of the Independent Labour Party, S. O. Davies of the Executive of the Miners' Federation, John Becket, M. P., Ellen Wilkinson, M. P., Harry Pollitt, R. Bridgeman, Arthur McManus and Helen Crawford. There were, besides, some men of note in literature, like Henri Barbusse and Toller, the German dramatist. Messages of goodwill were received from a large number of people among them being Mr. Gandhi, Einstein and Romain Rolland.

For an Indian it was exceedingly interesting to meet the various types of humanity represented in the Congress. The Chinese were most of them very young and full of energy and enthusiasm, their leading delegate being aptly described by a local paper as possessing "*les yeux joyeux d'un enfant étonné*". The traditional notion of the placid and tranquil Chinese received a rude shock, and one was confronted with a group of persons, with little of the subtleties of the hardened intellectual but with a great deal of driving force and a desire to fill the picture. China, of course, owing to circumstances, did fill the picture. I suppose the Chinese representatives were the natural products of a revolution and I was led regretfully to wish that we in India might also develop some of this energy and driving force, at the expense, if need be, of some of our intellectuality.

The Indonesians, chiefly from Java, were even more interesting for us. They were Moslems but even their names were partly derived from Sanskrit. Many of them bore a striking resemblance to the higher caste Hindus, and their customs, they told us, were still largely Hindu in origin. There are many Buddhists in Indonesia and we were glad to learn that the relations between the Moslems and the Buddhists were uniformly good and both of them worked together for the independence of their country.

The Negroes present varied from the darkest black to every shade of brown. There were able men among them full of eloquence and energy, but they bore traces of the terrible martyrdom which their race has suffered, more perhaps than any other people. Listening to their harrowing tale of suffering and their present unhappy condition one felt that the obstacles in their way were greater than any which other struggling peoples had to face and that full freedom would come to them only with the emancipation of all the peoples of the world.

The Arabs from Syria and North Africa were very different. Typical fighting men, who understood independence and fighting for it and cared for little else, and were wholly untainted with the slave mentality of more intellectual races.

The people from Latin America, dark as the Northern Indian, were again a different and interesting type. Most of us, specially from Asia, were wholly ignorant of the problems of South America, and of how the rising imperialism of the United States, with its tremendous resources and its immunity from outside attack, is gradually taking a strange hold of Central and South America. But we are not likely to remain ignorant much longer; for the great problem of the near future will be American Imperialism, even more than British Imperialism, which appears to have had its day and is crumbling fast. Or, it may be, and all indications point to it, that the two will unite together in an endeavour to create a powerful Anglo-Saxon block to dominate the world.

It was this bogey of the United States and the fear that they might not be able to stand up against them unaided, that drove them to seek for help from outside. So far, the weakness of Latin America has been the want of unity. Each state quarrels with the other and often within the states also there is disunion, usually founded by the United States. An interesting and instructive outcome of the Brussels Congress was the achievement of unity between the delegates of the various South American States. This unity was on paper only but it is probably the herald of a closer union of the States against their bullying neighbour of the North.

The South African Trade Union Congress of white workers sent a representative and so also did the Natal Native Council—a Negro organization. In these days of race hatred in South Africa and the ill-treatment of Indians, it was pleasing to hear the representative of white workers giving expression to the most advanced opinions on the equality of races and of workers of all races. The Negro and the white man jointly represented the South African workers and they worked together in the Congress.

The Congress held its sessions in the Egmont Palace in Brussels—a fine old building lent by the Belgian Government. The public sessions began on the 10th February. Preliminary informal meetings of such delegates as had arrived were, however, held on the 7th and 8th February. I arrived in Brussels on the evening of the 6th February and took part in all these informal meetings. On the 9th February representatives of the Belgian and foreign press were invited and a few delegates representing different countries made statements to them about the Congress and what they expected it to do. I am sending separately a copy of the statement I made on this occasion.

I was a member of the Præsidium—the presiding Committee or Subjects Committee of the Congress. This used to meet daily before the Congress and decide on the agenda for the session. I am sending separately a copy of the general agenda from which it will be noticed that there were six main divisions of the work. These were :—

1. Opening addresses.
2. Imperialism and its consequences in the colonial and semicolonial countries,
3. Imperialism and the danger of wars.

4. Co-operation between the national liberation movements in oppressed countries and the labour and anti-imperialist movements in imperialist countries.

5. Co-ordination of the national emancipation movements with the labour movements of all countries, colonial as well as imperialist.

6. Establishment of a permanent world-wide organization linking up all forces against imperialism and colonial oppression.

The word colonial here is used in a wide sense, as is usually done on the continent, and includes India and other countries under alien rule or occupation. It will be noticed that the different heads of the agenda somewhat overlap. The procedure adopted was to have general speeches delivered by prominent people under each head and then to have special resolutions tacked on to them. On the first day I was one of the persons who delivered the opening addresses. The official languages of the Congress were French, English and German. Every speech given in any of these languages was usually translated into the other two, though the German translation was sometimes dispensed with. Among the other languages used were Arabic and Chinese. An attempt to speak in Hebrew was stopped, partly for lack of time and partly because few, if any, would have understood it. The oral translations were good and rapid and the general arrangements for taking down verbatim reports and reproducing them in three languages were also satisfactory. It must be remembered however in reading the proceedings of the Congress that the translations are not always accurate and many of the resolutions and manifestos were originally drafted in a different language.

Each session of the Congress usually had a different president, supported by two others on either side of him. Most of the heads of delegations had thus a chance of presiding and on one occasion I was the president. The more or less permanent president of the Praesidium and the Congress was Edo Fimmen, a prominent labour leader of Holland and Secretary of the International Transport Workers.

I might mention here that among the flags put up in the hall where the Congress was held was our national flag—white, green and red. The *charkha* could not easily be reproduced in the short time we had. There were also big charts to show the prevalence of famines in India during the last hundred years and more; and a striking one showing the way Indian troops had been used in various parts of the world to conquer or oppress other peoples and fight the battles of British Imperialism.

The principal objects of the Congress, as disclosed in the agenda, were to bring about co-operation between the different national liberation movements and a co-ordination between such movements and the labour movements of various countries. This presupposes that there is a great deal in common not only between the national movements but also between them and the workers' struggle for emancipation. The former appears obvious enough, though it often happens that when an oppressed country achieves freedom it becomes in its turn an aggressor and an oppressor of others. A narrow nationalism frequently fights another narrow nationalism when their interests conflict, but both are of the same genus and equally likely to develop into aggressive imperialism, if an opportunity occurs. But this conflict cannot occur between two oppressed nations, unless one of them is utilised, as India has been so often in the past; by the Imperialist aggressor to oppress another. The second supposition however raises deeper problems. Are the interests of the workers in other countries the same as our national interests?

There is a growing belief in labour circles in England and the rest of the world that the exploitation of a subject people does not greatly benefit the labouring classes of the country which exploits. The only persons who really benefit are a small group of capitalists and but for the system which gives so much power to this little group there would be very few causes of friction between the workers of different countries. It is not for me to say how far this contention is correct. But there can be no doubt that advanced labour opinion at present is distinctly opposed to the exploitation of another country as it believes that it ultimately results in a reduction in their own wages in the home country and in the lowering of their standards. They feel that the safest way to protect themselves is to try to better the condition of the worker in the exploited country. Obvious possibilities of conflict in interest are when the exploited country boycotts the goods of a country as this necessarily results in increasing the unemployment of workers in the latter country. In regard to this the example of China is instructive and much to the point. The Canton Government, as is well known, carried on an intensive boycott of British goods and with such success that the great British commercial centre of Hongkong was nearly ruined and could only be kept going by means of large grants from the British exchequer. The great strength of China to-day is this power of economic boycott which has placed the British in an extraordinarily difficult position from which they are unable to extricate themselves. The Chinese boycott has done great injury to British trade and

must have added to unemployment in England. But so far as I am aware, no protest has ever been made by British Labour. It is apparently recognised by them that the Chinese, under the circumstances, had a right to boycott. Indeed instead of protesting, British Labour has during the present crisis given a magnificent demonstration of solidarity with the Chinese national movement and has succeeded largely in toning down the aggressive policy of the British Government. Partly this is due to the recognition that the Chinese movement has as its basic programme the emancipation of the peasants and labourers. According to this principle there appears to be no reason why outside labour should have the right to object to a boycott of Lancashire or other British goods which the Indian national movement may carry on. If, however, the Indian movement is run in the interests of vested interests and capitalism only, then of course there is little common ground between it and the workers' movements elsewhere. It might result, indeed, in the achievement of some measure of political liberty and a change in the people who exploit either by themselves or together with foreign exploiters. But if the Indian national movement concerns itself with the economic liberty of the masses as well as political liberty then the causes of friction with similar movements elsewhere ought to be few. As I understand the national movement in India is essentially one for the emancipation of the masses and I see no difficulty therefore in its co-operating willingly with similar movements in other parts of the world.

The problem of China naturally dominated the Brussels Congress and many of the resolutions were directly or indirectly connected with it. Next came India. As, owing to lack of time, some resolutions relating to other countries could not be taken up, there were a few protests and it was stated, though with all gentleness, that the Congress was proceeding as if it was almost an Indo-Chinese one. But there was no real objection to the prominence given to China and partly to India as everybody appeared to be convinced that the coming success of China would soon be followed by the success of India and the achievement of full freedom by these two countries would be a very great step forward in the emancipation of all oppressed people.

Indians were specially interested in four resolutions of the Congress. The first one related to India alone and was drafted by us. It ran as follows :

"This Congress accords its warm support to the Indian national movement for the complete freedom of India and is of opinion that the liberation of India from foreign domination and all kinds of exploitation is an essential step in the full emancipation of the peoples of the world.

"This Congress trusts that the peoples and workers of other countries will fully co-operate in this task and will specially take effective steps to prevent the despatch of foreign troops to India and the retention of an army of occupation in that country.

"This Congress further trusts that the Indian national movement will base its programme on the full emancipation of the peasants and workers of India, without which there can be no real freedom, and will co-operate with the movements for emancipation in other parts of the world".

This resolution requires no comment. I may point out however that stress has been laid in it on the necessity for the removal of the British army of occupation. During the Congress frequent mention was made to troops being sent to China and strong objection was taken to it. We pointed out that India had always to put up with an alien army of occupation and fresh contingents were continually being sent. The principle of China applied in its entirety, and in an even stronger measure, to India and similar steps should be taken, wherever possible, for the removal of this army of occupation from India.

Our second resolution was a joint declaration of the Indian and Chinese delegates and formed a kind of introduction to the third. Both the Chinese delegates and we felt it to be fitting to place on record our ancient intimate association from the days when the message of social emancipation which Gautama gave found such a ready welcome in China, and Chinese pilgrims and scholars came to India to learn of her wisdom, to the unhappy interruption of this intercourse at the beginning of British domination in India. The declaration runs as follows :—

The Indian and Chinese delegates make the following joint declaration :

For more than three thousand years the people of India and China were united by the most intimate cultural ties. From the days of Buddha to the end of the Mughal period and the beginning of British domination in India this friendly intercourse continued uninterrupted.

After the East India Company had by intrigue and force, secured its firm hold on the greater part of India, the English began looking for new sources of revenue and new markets. They not only introduced poppy cultivation into areas where food had previously been grown, but also thrust Indian opium on the unwilling Chinese people by force



of arms. Since that infamous Opium War of 1840-1844, Indian mercenary troops have been sent again to China in support of British capitalist brigandage in that country. For 87 years Indian troops have been permanently stationed as policemen in Hongkong, Shanghai, etc. Time and again they have been used to shoot down Chinese workers and have thus created ill-will in China against the people of India. Even as we make this declaration, Indian troops are again on their way to China in an attempt to crush the Chinese revolution.

With the strengthening of British imperialism, India was cut off more and more from intercourse with China, and in their cultural and intellectual isolation, the Indian people have now become completely ignorant of the condition of China.

It is this extreme ignorance that makes it difficult to-day to organise effective means of preventing India's money and man-power from being used for the enslavement of the Chinese people. We think it urgent and essential that active propaganda should be carried on in India to educate the people regarding China and to arouse them to the necessity of immediate action. We must now resume the ancient personal, cultural and political relations between the two peoples. British imperialism which in the past has kept us apart and done us so much injury, is now the very force that is uniting us in a common endeavour to overthrow it.

We trust that the leaders of the Indian movement will do all in their power to co-ordinate their struggle with that of the Chinese people so that by simultaneously engaging British imperialism on two of its most vital fronts, China may receive active support in her present struggle and the final victory of both people may be secured.

The third resolution was a signed declaration of the British, Indian and Chinese delegates. We suggested to the British delegates that as their country was the chief sinner both in regard to India and China it would be desirable if they prepared a statement as to what they proposed doing. They therefore prepared this declaration. It was entirely their draft, except for one or two verbal changes. Both the Chinese and Indian delegates accepted this. It is possible that we might have drafted it in a slightly different way or preferred minor alterations. But we recognised that it was a courageous declaration and that it laid down an effective line of action, even in regard to India, and we decided to leave it in the form given to it by the British delegates. This declaration was signed by all the British delegates present, by H. Liau of the Executive Council of the Kuo Min Tang and by me. It was placed before the Congress by John Becket, M. P. and George Lansbury, M. P. also spoke. The declaration ran as follows:

We, the undersigned, British, Indian and Chinese delegations consider that the task of all working-class forces in Imperialist countries is:

1. To fight for full emancipation side by side with the national forces in oppressed countries, in order to secure complete independence wherever such national forces so desire.
2. To oppose all forms of coercion against colonial peoples.
3. To vote against all credits, naval, military and air for the maintenance of armed forces to be used against oppressed nations.
4. To expose the horrors of Imperialism to the civil and military populations
5. To expose imperialistic policy, in the light of the working-class struggle for freedom.

#### In Relation to the Immediate Situation in China.

1. We demand the immediate withdrawal of all armed forces from Chinese territory and waters.
2. We urge the need of direct action, including strikes and the imposition of the embargo to prevent movements of munitions and troops either to India or China and from India to China.
3. That estimates relating either to warlike preparations or to war shall be voted against.
4. That in the event of armed intervention or open war every effort shall be made within the Labour movement to use every weapon possible in the working-class struggle to prevent hostilities.
5. We demand the unconditional recognition of the Nationalist Government, the abolition of the unequal treaties and of extra-territorial rights and the surrender of foreign concessions.
6. Finally, in the interests of the Trade Union and Labour Movements in Britain, India and China we pledge ourselves to work for their immediate, close and active co-operation.

George Lansbury, M. P.; A. Fenner Bickway; Secretary, Independent Labour party, E. O. Davies; Member of the Executive of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain

John Becket M. P.; Ellen Wilkinson, M. P.; Harry Pollitt; R. Bridgeman; Arthur McManus; Helen Crawford; William Rust; J. Stokes; H. Lian; Jawaharlal Nehru.

It will be noticed that the first part of the resolution applies specially to India and clause 2 of the second part has also an important reference to India. The declaration as a whole refers to the duty of "working-class forces in Imperialist countries," which so far as the signatories are concerned, means Great Britain. I should like to draw special attention to clause 1 of the first part in which the signatories declare that they would "fight for full emancipation side by side with the national forces in oppressed countries, in order to secure complete independence wherever such national forces so desire"; to clause 3 "to vote against all credits, military, naval and air for the maintenance of armed forces to be used against oppressed nations"; to clause 4 that they would carry on anti-imperialist propaganda even in the soldiery and to clause 2 of part 2 where direct action and strikes are recommended to prevent movements of munitions and troops to India and China in case of war.

This declaration was sent by cable, at the special desire of the Congress, by the president, Edo Fimmen, to the president of the Indian National Congress and the National Government of China. I trust the A. I. C. C. will approve of it. The resolution lays down a very clear and definite and advanced policy for British labour and it should be welcomed. But it should be borne in mind that it only binds the signatories and certainly does not yet represent the majority opinion in British Labour.

The fourth resolution in which the Indian delegates were interested was about Mesopotamia. We felt that as no delegate from Mesopotamia was present and as Indian troops had conquered and stationed in Mesopotamia, and a large number of Indian clerks and employees were taking part in the exploitation of the country, it was up to us to demand the recall of the army of occupation and to say that we wished to be no parties to this Imperialist adventure, even though we might profit a little from the drippings of British exploitation.

There were a number of other resolutions not directly concerned with India. Many others could not be considered for lack of time, much to the regret of delegates from the countries concerned. Some long manifestos were hurriedly passed by the Congress at its last sessions when there was little time to consider them in detail.

Finally a permanent organisation was formed. The Praesidium, with some alterations, was made into the General Council of the League. A list of members of this Council is sent separately. There are five honorary presidents of the Council and in order to show honour to India I was included in these five. The others are Einstein, Romain Rolland, Madame Sun Yat Sen and George Lansbury. The Council has an executive of 9 members with four substitute members, who can always attend and advise, and can vote when any of the regular members are absent. It was proposed to have me as one of three secretaries but I pointed out that this was absurd as I could not even attend meetings from India. Thereupon I was not made secretary but in spite of the same objection I was made a member of the Executive Committee. There are three Secretaries; Gibarti, a Hungarian and a capable linguist and organiser, who has so far been in charge of the work; Lian, a Chinaman, usually resident in Berlin; and Senghor, a negro from the French African Colonies but resident in Paris. Lansbury is to be Chairman of the Executive Committee and Edo Fimmen the Vice-Chairman. The office will be in Paris but for some months it will continue in Berlin.

Under the constitution as adopted the organisations that sent delegates can be considered as constituent or associated bodies and they are expected to contribute to the funds of the League having regard to their strength of membership and financial position. It is of course open to any such organisation to refuse to be associated should it so desire. The Indian National Congress can thus for the present be considered an associated body. I trust the A. I. C. C. will continue this association and will take full advantage of it. The advantage of such association appear to me to be great and the disadvantages inconsiderable. Among the advantages are the opportunities to keep in touch with many Asiatic and other countries with problems not dissimilar to ours, and the use of the League as a very efficient organ for giving any publicity that we may desire. During the past few years the Indian Congress and the A. I. C. C. have frequently discussed the question of foreign propaganda and publicity and have expressed a wish that something should be done. But for obvious reasons nothing much has been or could be done. Our resources in men and money are limited and modern publicity requires vast sums which we certainly cannot spare. Our contention has been in the past that the best propaganda outside is effective action in the country which will compel attention. This holds good to-day and will continue to hold good. But if we can take advantage of another organisation to do the outside work for us efficiently without our spending much money or energy over it,

there seems to be no reason why we should not avail ourselves of it. But apart from the question of publicity, the important consideration is the contacts which we can develop, through the League, with other national movements. There is yet another consideration to be borne in mind. The League against Imperialism is an infant to-day and its future cannot be prophesied. But it is a sturdy infant with great possibilities of growth. As many speakers at Brussels pointed out it has the germs in it of developing into a real League of Nations of Peoples, a truer one than the League of Governments which sits at Geneva. This may be an exaggerated notion at present but it is not wholly baseless and it is to the interest of the Indian Congress to be associated with an organisation which might play a big role in the future. It is clear of course that any association with the League does not limit in any way the freedom of activity of our Congress.

I feel that whatever our internal politics might be we cannot, in our own interests and in the interests of the rest of the world, afford to remain isolated from the great movements and forces which are shaping the future. Practically our sole contact with the outside world is through England and the English language. This gives us a very one-sided and sometimes a perverted outlook on foreign affairs. We must therefore welcome all opportunities of developing contacts with other countries and movements. We are today facing a crisis in China and it is rumoured that the British Cabinet intends to break off all relations with Russia. I cannot say what the outcome of these crises will be but everyone knows that war is a possibility. A war between England and China must affect India deeply, in more ways than one, and a war between England and Russia will not be a far away affair for us but will be fought at our very doorstep and within sound of our ears, and with Indian blood and treasure. We cannot ignore it or remain aloof, or else our best laid plans for our national betterment will break down and we shall find ourselves suddenly faced with crises for which we are wholly unprepared and stamped into a war for the support of the very system against which we are contending. If we want to prevent war we cannot wait till it is actually declared. It is very difficult to do much when the fatal plunge has been taken. But it is possible to do a great deal even for a subject country like India if public opinion is educated and made to realise whither the imperialist policy of our rulers is tending. If we want to stop the shameless use of Indian troops against our brethren in China we have to go to our people and tell them about it and raise such a storm of protest that it will be impossible for the Government to send a single Indian soldier abroad. Our people will not gain by the Imperialist adventures of England or her wars. Why should we not make it clear, with tremendous weight of mass opinion behind us, that we shall not be pawns in the hands of English Imperialists, that we shall not take part in any wars at her bidding, and that above all we shall not permit our fellow-countrymen to be used to crush people for whom we have every feeling of friendship and sympathy. May I draw the attention of the A. I. C. C. to the resolution of the Council of the Independent Labour Party of England—a copy of which I am sending—on the Chinese crisis? British Labour is not as interested in China and her national struggle as India is, and yet it has taken up a most courageous attitude, not merely an expression of sympathy, but a definite line of action along which they are working and intend to work even if unhappily hostilities should break out. The A. I. C. C. can do no less, both for the good name and for the future success of our national movement.

As I have stated above, I had occasion to meet many delegates from Asiatic countries in Brussels. There was a very strong desire amongst them for a closer bond between Asiatic countries. Nothing practicable could be suggested. We felt that for the present the League against Imperialism would offer us a common meeting ground and we could always remain in touch through it. In addition, our national organizations could remain in direct touch with each other and exchange publications and reports. At our Annual Congresses and meetings we should invite and welcome fraternal delegates from the other organizations, and whenever opportunity occurs we might visit the other countries and study the national movement there.

Our Chinese friends were specially eager to welcome Indians in China whether as accredited representatives of the Indian Congress or as students or visitors. Nothing would please them more than to have a visit from representatives of the A. I. C. C. to study the Chinese situation on the spot. For students they are prepared to afford every facility and even now, it is well known, many of the records of ancient Indian culture can only be found in China.

The news that we get in India about China nearly all comes through English official sources and is tainted. We must not base any conclusions on this one-sided and often perverted information. We have had enough experience during the last war of the prostitution of news by the English for the sake of propaganda. The same thing is happening again and we must beware of it. The cry of English lives in danger is raised and 20,000

soldiers and a vast armada is sent ostensibly to protect them. But only a few days ago it was stated in the English House of Commons by one of the Ministers that in China during the last two years three British subjects had lost their lives and during the same period 250 Chinese civilians were killed and 260 Chinese soldiers were killed and wounded by British soldiers. This is the official British estimate—the Chinese estimate which was also largely the estimate of the British press at the time the occurrences took place, is that during the massacres of Shanghai and Wahnsien thousands were killed by the British soldiery. Lives are certainly in danger in China today, but, as has been pertinently asked, whose lives? They are the lives of the Chinese and the danger comes from British guns and unhappily from Indian guns.

It is thus necessary for arrangements to be made for a full and reliable service of news about China. This should not be difficult as there are many Chinese Information Bureaus and I trust the A. I. C. C. Office will take early steps in the matter.

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## India and the Labour Party.

### The Blackpool Conference.

India occupied a prominent place in the proceedings of the Labour Party Conference at Blackpool which concluded on the 7th October 1927. The greater part of this day was devoted to two resolutions dealing with the constitutional position and the political prisoners. Both resolutions were adopted unanimously.

#### 1.—Self-Determination for India.

Mr. George Lansbury M. P., the new Chairman of the Labour Party, moved the following resolution on behalf of the Executive Committee:—

“The Conference re-affirms the right of the Indian people to full self-government and self-determination, and therefore is of opinion that the policy of the British Government should be one of continuous co-operation with the Indian people, with the object of establishing India, at the earliest possible moment and by her consent, as an equal partner with the other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

“The Conference declares that the Royal Commission to be appointed under the Government of India Act should be so constituted, and its methods of doing its work so arranged, that it will enjoy the confidence and co-operation of the Indian people.”

He said that despite the distance which divided India from Britain it was the duty of British workers to take an active interest in Indian problems. In the first place, the British Government was still largely responsible for the administration of Indian affairs, and the British workers, in accordance with their belief in democracy and self-determination, must associate themselves vigorously with the Indian people in demanding self-government for India. The political enslavement of India was a humiliation both to the Indian people and to the British workers. The British people would be disgraced so long as they accepted the injustice which was done to the Indian people. The Royal Commission, which was to report on a new Constitution for India, must be of such a nature that the Indian people could be expected to co-operate with it. They could not be expected to co-operate unless there was a strong representation of the Indian view.

Mr. Charles Roden Buxton (I. L. P.) supporting the resolution said that Labour should accept the full consequence of the principle of self-determination as applied to India. They welcomed the frequently expressed view of representative Indians in favour of continued association with the British Commonwealth of Nations, but Labour should frankly recognise the right of India to full independence if it was demanded. The forthcoming Royal Commission ought to consist of Indians in at least half of its membership.

## 2.—Release of Political Prisoners.

Mr. Fenner Brockway (I. L. P.) moved the following resolution :—

"The Conference re-affirms its declaration that, with a view to a new atmosphere for friendly discussion of the constitutional status of India, all coercive measures and repressive legislations should be withdrawn; it recognises that some steps have already been taken in the release of political prisoners, especially in Bengal, and that the results have admittedly justified action; the Conference, however, urges the Government to use its authority in favour of the immediate release or trial of all those persons now in prison, or detained without trial, who were convicted by Martial Law or Special Tribunals."

He said that in January last, Sir Alexander Muddiman, the Home Member in the Indian Government, had stated that there were 961 political prisoners in Indian jails. His definition of "political prisoners" was narrow, and it was safe to assert that there were now considerably more than 1000 political prisoners in India. He cited three examples of political prisoners. During the war in the Punjab, special tribunals tried political prisoners in batches of 80 and 100. Among those sentenced to death were boys of 21, 18, and 15. Among those imprisoned for life were 11 boys under 30 years of age including two under 15. Forty of these prisoners were still in jail. It was monstrous that twelve years after the war, they should be denied liberty. Mr. Brockway also made a special appeal for Indians in Europe who were exiled for war-time activities.

The second class of political prisoners were those arrested at the time of the Amritsar Massacre when martial law was declared. Eighty Indians sentenced at this time were in jail after 8 years.

The third class were prisoners arrested and imprisoned under the Bengal Ordinance without charge or trial. For those the Labour Party had a special responsibility as the Ordinance was promulgated during the period of Labour in Office. Thirty of these prisoners had recently been released without any bad results, but forty remained in prison.

It was of little use to appeal to the Conservative Government on the grounds of justice or humanity. They had shown in their treatment of the British workers that they had neither. And they were not likely to reveal these qualities in the case of Indians thousands of miles away. But they might appeal on the ground of expediency. It was impossible for the small White minority permanently to keep 300 million Indians in subjection, and if a new Constitution was to be acceptable to India a new psychology must be created in India. No single Act could help to secure that more effectively than the repeal of all repressive laws and the release of all political prisoners. To the Labour Party, however, they appealed on the grounds of humanity and justice as well as of expediency. They would look to the next Labour Government to make one of its first acts the withdrawal of all repressive legislations and the opening of the prison doors.

# Indians in East Africa.

## The East African Federation.

On the 14th July an official announcement of far-reaching importance was made regarding the proposal to set up a Special Commission of Enquiry to go into the question of the federation of East and Central Africa. Reference was made to the bearing of the question on the position of Indians in Kenya. The official communication was in the form of a summary of a White Paper issued by His Majesty's Government, announcing that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had even authorised to send a Special Commission of Enquiry.

### Nairobi Conference and After.

The White Paper begins by stating that, during the last few years, the policy as regards East Africa and the Dependencies has been largely governed by the statement issued by His Majesty's Government in 1923 which, while primarily designing to deal with the specific question of Indians in Kenya, deals also in no small degree with East African policy as a whole. The White Paper then refers to the developments since 1923. First came the visit of the East African Commission of 1924, whose report brought out the fundamental difference between East Africa and other African territories, namely, that in all the East African territories, there were some regions specially suited for European planters and settlers and others specially suited for Native development. Second came, early in 1926, the Conference of the East African Governors at Nairobi. The White Paper here refers to the observations in the report of this conference on the "dual policy," i.e., the complementary development of non-Native and Native production. The passages quoted point out that East Africa is already committed to this policy; and that it necessarily raises the whole problem of arriving at a just and far-seeing method of harmonising the best progress and welfare of the Natives with maximum production.

The White Paper continues by showing that this conference was the first step towards securing better co-operation between the Administrations of the territories, whose boundaries are in the main the result of historical accidents, rather than expressions of ethnological and geographical factors. It then refers to the various instances in which European settlers have shown a tendency to desire a closer contact. As other recent developments pointing to the necessity for a closer union between the Administrations, reference is made to the (1) East African Guaranteed Loan Act, (2) the movement favouring co-operation in research, and (3) the postal union between Kenya and Uganda.

The next two paragraphs of the White Paper run: The growth of European and other settlements of the East African Dependencies raises the problem of the part which these communities must play in the political as well as the economic life of the several territories. Their claim to share progressively the responsibilities however cannot be limited to representa-

tion of their own community's interests; and, if clashes between these interests and those of the vast Native populations are to be avoided, their share in the trusteeship for the progress and welfare of the Natives must be developed. Quite apart from this necessity, the dual policy in regard to economic development should have its counterpart in the political evolution of the territories. Every year, we are providing more educational facilities for the Natives and although in some places it may be many years before the Natives can take a direct part in the central legislature, their place in the body politic must be provided for.

After referring to the desirability of the investigation of the means of securing perhaps in successive stages (1) a closer union and co-operation between the territories and an increasing association of the resident immigrant communities in the responsibilities of Government and (2) the creation of a more effective machinery for Native representation, and after a reference to article 10 of the mandate for Tanganyika, the White Paper ends as follows:—

#### Britain's Responsibility.

"In the event of the investigations proving that some, at any rate, of the East African territories are ripe for the creation of a Federal Constitution, consequential changes may be required in the powers and composition of the existing legislature. In any such changes, it will be essential to maintain the principle that the administration of East and Central African territories is based on the exercise of a trust, by His Majesty's Government on behalf of the African population; and that, while they may be now prepared to associate with themselves in that trust the members of the resident immigrant communities, they will still ensure that the principle of their trusteeship will be observed. The responsibilities of His Majesty's Government for the territories of Eastern and Central Africa, with their 12½ millions of inhabitants, are of the very gravest character; and the possibilities of advantage to the Empire from a proper development of these areas are almost incalculable. On the other hand the possibilities of disaster through failure to guide that development aright, are no less plainly discernible; and it is clearly right that no time should be lost in deciding on the course which our policy must pursue if the highest interests of all concerned, of whatever race, are to be secured. At the same time, it will be a fatal error if any decisive step is taken before we have satisfied ourselves that such a step will be received with goodwill by those whose co-operation will be necessary for its success.

#### Financial Aspect of the Question.

"Financial considerations cannot be ignored; and before the communities in East Africa can fairly be asked to express their opinions on so far-reaching a matter, the cost of any scheme must be estimated. It is therefore clear that before His Majesty's Government can formulate any final decision upon these subjects, a special commission of enquiry must be sent out to East and Central Africa. His Majesty's Government accordingly make the following announcement:—

"His Majesty's Government consider that, as a result of the discussions between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the representatives of the territories in British Central and East Africa who attended the recent Colonial Conference, that some form of closer union between the territories of Central and East Africa appears desirable, more particularly in regard

to the development of transport and communications, customs tariffs and customs administration, scientific research and defence. They have, therefore, authorised the Secretary of State to send to Africa a special commission with the following terms of reference :—

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE.

(1) To make recommendations as to whether, either by Federation or some other form of closer union, a more effective co-operation between the different Governments in Central and East Africa may be secured, more particularly in regard to the development of transport and communications, customs tariffs, and customs administrations, scientific research and defence, (2) to consider which territories could, either now or at some future time, be brought within any such closer union ; and in particular how best to give effect to article 10 of the Mandate for Tanganyika Territory which provides that the Mandatory may constitute the territory, into a customs, fiscal and administrative union or federation, with the adjacent territories under its own sovereignty or control, provided always that measures to adduce to that end do not infringe the provisions of the Mandate, (3) to make recommendations in regard to possible changes in the powers and composition of the various Legislative Councils of the several territories (a) as a result of the establishment of any federal council or other common authority, (b) so as to associate more closely in the responsibilities and trusteeship of Government the immigrant communities domiciled in the country, and (c) so as ultimately to secure a more direct representation of Native interests, (4) to suggest how the dual policy recommended by the conference of the East African Governors, (i.e., the complementary development of Native and non-Native communities) can best be progressively applied in the political as well as in the economic sphere, (5) to make recommendations as to what improvements may be required in internal communications between the various territories so as to facilitate the working of the Federation on a closer union and (6) to report on the financial aspect of any proposal which they may make under any of the above headings.

“ In making the declaration of policy involved in setting up a commission, with these terms of reference, His Majesty's Government wish to make it clear, that they adhere to the underlying principles of the White Paper 1922 entitled ‘ Indians in Kenya ’ (command paper 1922), both in regard to the political status and other rights of British Indian residents, and also of the Native population, as trustees for their welfare until such time as they can take part more fully in their own government and in the common affairs of all the races inhabiting the territories. At the same time, they wish to place on record their view that, while these responsibilities of trusteeship must, for some considerable time, rest mainly on the agents of the Imperial Government, they desire to associate more closely in this high and honourable task, those who as colonists or residents have identified their interests with the prosperity of the country.”

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### The Deputation to the Viceroy.

On the 7th Sept. a representative deputation, consisting of Sir Purshotamas Thakurdas, Mr. Cocke, Lala Lajpat Rai, Mr. Jayakar, Mr. Jinnah, Mr. K. C. Roy, Mr. C. F. Andrews, Sir Abdul Qayam, Raja Sir Rampal Singh, Mr. Natesan and Lala Ramsaran Das waited on His Excellency the Viceroy in connection with the East African situation.

The following statement was read on behalf of the deputation by Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas :—

You Excellency,—We gratefully acknowledge your kindness in granting so readily and at such a short notice, this interview to us as representatives of the Indian legislature and of other interests concerned in the Indian position in Eastern Africa. Our apprehensions concerning the recent developments in those territories have prompted us to approach you. These anxieties came suddenly to a head, owing to the speech delivered by Sir Edward Grigg, immediately after he had returned to Kenya from London. He is reported to have stated that the recommendations of the Feetham Commission on local Government had already been accepted by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and also to have foreshadowed an elected majority in the Kenya Legislative Council.

Your Excellency will personally remember how in the year 1922, a settlement with India was reached by yourself on the one hand, as representing the Colonial Office, and by Earl Winterton on the other hand as representing the India Office, which has gone down to history as the Wood-Winterton agreement. That settlement, though not in every respect satisfying Indian aspirations, was regarded, in this country, as an honourable compromise, and your own part, as one of the two signatories, in bringing about such a happy solution, was highly appreciated.

The publication, in Kenya, of this settlement of 1922, led to open hostility. In consequence the Kenya conversations were opened in London in 1923, which resulted in a new settlement, embodied in the White Paper of that year. While this new settlement of the Kenya question by the Colonial Office, proved unsatisfactory to Indian national sentiment, nevertheless, there were certain important sections which allayed our immediate fears. The chief of these was section 2 entitled "future constitutional development." This section declared that His Majesty's Government regarded the grant of responsible Government in Kenya as out of the question within any period of time that need to be taken into consideration.

How necessary such a constitutional safeguard was at that critical period, may be seen from the fact that an attempt was made before the end of the year 1923 to hurry through an Immigration Bill, which would have injuriously restricted Indian immigration. This measure was disallowed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. J. H. Thomas.

An important Conference took place in London in the year 1924 between the representatives of the India Office and the representatives of Colonial Office, which led to fruitful results. A period of comparative quiet in Kenya ensued, and an agreement by mutual consent was reached concerning representation on the Municipal Council of Nairobi, which appeared to promise well for the future.

But, when the new white paper called the "Future policy in regard to Eastern Africa" was published in July 1927, grave questions arose in our minds, because it appeared radically to challenge that part of the earlier white paper of 1923, which was entitled "future constitutional development." We were also disturbed by the simultaneous publication of the Feetham Report which recommended a drastic curtailment of the Indian representation on Municipal Councils. His Majesty's Government have arrived at a decision to appoint a Royal Commission on Eastern African Federation without the public in India being made aware of it. We felt the necessity of getting adequate representation on the Royal Commission itself with a view to safeguard our national interests. We anticipated that an opportunity would be given to the Government of India to make suggestions concerning the Feetham Report before its conclusions were

accepted. But now the cabled news of Sir Edward Grigg's speech at Mombassa, has given us serious cause for alarm. We are unfortunate in not having been able to obtain a full telegraphic report, though we have made every effort to do so.

Since the present session of the Indian legislature is rapidly drawing to a close, we have ventured to ask you to hear us in spite of the uncertainty of the information available; for when once the session is ended, everyone will be scattered. It is quite needless, in approaching Your Excellency, with your own full experience of Colonial affairs and your generous consideration of the Kenya question in 1922 when Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, to dilate upon the high importance of the Indian interests in East Africa. We would only venture to remind you that the recognition by His Majesty's Government, of the fact that these territories have had a special and intimate relationship with India dating from the earliest days of British occupation has never been withdrawn. In recent years, this relationship with India has become even closer and the links of connection more binding than ever. The natural tendency of the future will be for India to play a still more prominent part in the development of Eastern Africa; for Nature herself has ordered these mutual relations between the two countries, and they are strengthened and confirmed by the fact that India and Eastern Africa are parts of the same Commonwealth.

We would therefore request Your Excellency that a representation may be made to His Majesty's Government in the following points:—

1. That final action should not be taken on the Feetham report, until the the Indian point of view has been examined.

2. That adequate representation of Indian interests be assured on the Commission itself.

3. That permission be given to a small deputation appointed by the Government of India to go over to Eastern Africa, in order (a) to make a general survey, (b) to help the resident Indian community in preparing their evidence for the Commission.

4. That, before His Majesty's Government come to any decision on the report of the Royal Commission, the Government of India be allowed to make representations on any points affecting India, through a Committee which will confer, for that purpose, with the Secretary of State for the Colonies in London.

5. That no decision with regard to an elected majority in the Kenya Council be taken pending the conclusion of the work of the Royal Commission and before consultation with the Government of India.

We are aware that these requests are numerous, but the vital importance of this whole subject to the Indian people makes us anxious not to omit anything which may safeguard our recognised national interests.

#### Lord Irwin's Reply.

His Excellency the Viceroy, replying, said he was glad to meet such a representative and distinguished deputation. He claimed a certain measure of familiarity with these questions as the joint author of the Wood-Winterton agreement and as a member of the British Cabinet when the Kenya White paper of 1923 was approved. The British Government had consistently sought to pursue the promotion of Imperial solidarity. The only important aspect in which the White Paper of July 1927 differed from its predecessor was in respect of associating more closely in the responsibilities of Government, the immigrant communities. The legitimate inference from that was, that the claims of Indians, constituting as they did an important section of the communities, to such an association, would be investigated by the Commission. The Colonial Secretary had stated on July 19th, expressly, in the House of Commons, that the question of self-Government was not implied in the white paper, any more than it was implied in the White Paper of 1923. The Government of the proposed Commission, made a representation for the inclusion of some one conversant with the Indian conditions. They had also forwarded the Assembly's proceedings on Mr. K. C. Roy's adjournment motion.

The Government fully appreciated the general views of the Indian people that Indian interests should be represented by Indians, and would do their best to give effect to it. But the final decision regarding the personnel rested with the British Government who were in the best position to consider the various factors, determining the choice of the personnel, and who were not unmindful of the vital Indian interests involved.

The second suggestion that a small deputation be sent by the Government to East Africa, had been already engaging the attention of the Government. But it is premature to consider at present the steps to be taken to safeguard Indian interests after the Commission had reported.

As regards Reuter's summary of Sir Edward Grigg's speech, they had cabled for a full report, but had not yet received the official version of the speech, as also of the Feetham Commission's recommendations. The Government of India, His Excellency assured, however, were under no misapprehension as to the importance, to the Indian community in Kenya, of adequate representation on local bodies and of the character and composition of the majority in the Colonial legislature. If and as, circumstances required it, the Government of India would do everything in their power to secure adequate protection for legitimate Indian interests.

His Excellency could not however help feeling that the question in East Africa, should not be unaffected by the recent developments in the relations of India with South Africa, for which he paid a tribute to the Habibullah Deputation, to Mr. Sastri and to Mr. Andrews. The spirit of South Africa, he trusted, would not be without its influence outside and beyond the territories of the Union. At any rate the atmosphere was more favourable than that which was prevailing only a few years back. For his part, he saw no reason to doubt that, with patience and goodwill on both sides, they would succeed in bringing to a gradual solution those questions on which so much depended not only for India and Great Britain or even the British Empire, but for all humanity.

The Viceroy finally assured that the Government of India felt no less deeply than the deputation, and were both anxious and determined to leave nothing undone, which it was in their power to do, to uphold the status and honour of the Indian communities in East Africa.

### Sir E. Grigg's Address to Kenya Council.

The following "Appeal to Indians" is extracted from the text of Sir Edward Grigg's address to the Kenya Legislature, published in the "East African Standard," :—

Before I end, I would make a special appeal to the Indian members of this Council and to the Indian community throughout the Colony to co-operate wholeheartedly in the work and objects of the Commission. It is time that any fear or bitterness left by the controversy of four years ago should finally disappear. Some extreme things were then said, no doubt upon both sides; but they were spoken in the heat of controversy. They should now be forgotten for ever.

The communal principle of representation established by the White Paper of 1923, has in truth given security to Indians no less than to Europeans and the settlement of 1923 in regard to the political status and other rights of British Indians in Kenya stands fast. They themselves have now wisely accepted it, and they can rest assured that their acceptance will strengthen the desire of this Council and Government to provide as fully as possible for the needs of the Indian community. I have now visited the greater part of Southern and Eastern

Africa, in which Indians are receiving so much practical proof as in Kenya of goodwill towards Indian education, the care of Indian women and children and Indian welfare generally.

The recent concordat of Indian questions between the Union Government and the Government of India has shown how much more can be achieved in these stubborn problems by a spirit of co-operation than by a spirit of controversy. I hope that moral will be taken to heart by all who have, as I myself have, the welfare of Indians at heart; for nothing could more seriously prejudice Indian interests than purely racial opposition to the closer union and constitutional development of East African Territories.

We here are all fellow-subjects of the greatest Sovereign in the world, and partners in the world-wide political system over which he reigns. In all that we plan we are right to think most carefully for ourselves; but it behoves us also to think broadly of our neighbours in East Africa, of our fellow-subjects of all races, and of the Empire as a whole.

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## The Kenya Indian Congress.

The Kenya Indian Congress opened at Nairobi on the 25th Dec. 1927.

The President, Mr. Tyab Ali, in his presidential address, traced the early history of the part played by Indians in the development of East Africa and deplored the absence of Indian members on the Hilton Young Commission. He pointed out that there was no necessity for a Federation Commission, in view of the imperial policy laid down by the White Paper of 1923. He referred to portions of the speech of Sir Donald Cameron and strongly deprecated the idea of a federation and criticised Sir Edward Grigg's attitude.

He strongly deprecated the policy of the Local Government of perpetuating segregation. He said the Indian community demanded inclusion in the defence force if it was going to be maintained. Land policy was subject to racial restrictions retarding the progress and development of the colony.

The President resented the Government policy of gradual elimination of the Indian element from Government service. The Government's contribution towards education of Indians and Africans was niggardly, and the acceptance by the Government of the principle of free and compulsory education, restricting the benefit of the same to Europeans only and excluding non-Europeans, was highly unjust.

Regarding native labour and registration, the President said the entire system should be condemned as conducive to slavery. He appealed to the Government and the people of India seriously to consider the advisability of opening information bureaux in India and to encourage and facilitate Indian immigration. Bonafide Indian farmers should be invited to Tanganyika.

He strongly condemned the recommendations of the Feetham Commission. He referred to the objectionable policy of the East Africa Government, regarding possession of arms by Indians. The Indian community were determined to secure common franchise as the only solution of the estranged relations between Europeans and non-Europeans. He urged the European community in Kenya to live in peace and harmony with Indians as they were doing in Tanganyika and Uganda.

### Sir E. Grigg's Administration Condemned.

The Congress on the 27th instant unanimously passed a resolution, moved by the Hon. Mr. Phadke, Executive Councillor, supported by Indian legislators and others recording its emphatic protest against the generally hostile attitude of Sir Edward Grigg, Governor of Kenya, towards Indian interests and aspirations, and recording the opinion that His Excellency had thereby forfeited the confidence of the Indian community.

The Congress also unanimously decided to present a memorandum and give evidence before the Hilton Young Commission.

### The Feetham Report.

It was further unanimously resolved to withdraw representatives from all Government bodies in the event of the Feetham Commission recommendations being implemented.

The Congress placed on record its firm determination to resist such action by every constitutional means.

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# The Legislative Assembly.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 320, VOL. I)

## Discussion on Currency Bill

On the 7th MARCH there was considerable rush for seats in the public galleries to hear on the floor of the Assembly the echoes of the acute controversies that found such expression all over the country on the issue of the exchange ratio. A similar interest was roused last August but public went away disappointed as the debate was postponed.

Sir Basil BLACKETT, in moving the consideration of the Currency Bill, said the Bill was a transitional measure to cover the period till the Gold Standard and Reserve Bank Act came into operation. The principle of the Bill was that the time had come to restore real stability to Indian Currency and that could only be at 1s. 6d. Whatever the arguments for or against immediate stabilization at 1s. 6d., the alternative of immediate stabilization at 1s. 4d. was entirely out of question, for it was absolutely unthinkable that they should suddenly and arbitrarily decree a depreciation of 11 per cent in the value of every rupee, every currency note, every title to money in India. If there was choice, it was between stabilizing at 1s. 6d. or not stabilizing at all. In this case, discussing the alternative, Sir Basil Blackett said the first alternative was complete abstention by Government intervention to regulate exchange leading to enormous fluctuations and probably to a money panic and eventually if it was conceivably possible at all to a 2s. rupee. The second alternative was to stabilize prices round the existing level of wholesale prices, say an index number of about 150, or around some different level of prices, leading to long period of uncertainty, of undoing what had been done and taking risks of beginning all over again, of the absence of stability of exchange and of having undiminished controversy which would then centre round what should be the index number. Stabilization at 1s. 4d. as advocated by a local party in the country would lead to immense immediate losses, social and labour unrest, higher prices all round in terms of rupees and increased cost of living all round in terms of rupees, deficits in budgets of every Government in India involving increased taxation and when final equilibrium had been restored, there would be no permanent benefit to any body. The measure before the house proposed stabilization at 1s. 6d. and as this ratio had held the field for now two years, it was for its opponents to show cause for upsetting it. He contended that the eleven points he stated to the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta in December last had not been seriously challenged. He re-stated these points and expanded some of them.

Deprecating loose talk on 1s. 4d. ratio, the Finance Member showed that 1s. 4d. was maintained between 1899 to 1916 by careful regulation of currency or what was called "manipulation" and the fact that 1s. 4d. was artificial and not natural was demonstrated clearly in 1917 and by the troubles faced since then. Thus in no sense 1s. 4d. was the natural ratio nor was it the established ratio to-day. He referred also to coincidence that in 1899 the Fowler Committee's majority report recommended 1s. 4d. in preference to 1s. 3d. proposed by the minority, mainly for the reason that the former was the defacto ratio. Sir Basil next argued that no ratio could possibly be permanently more advantageous for India than another. Replying to the argument of an agriculturist who sold his produce for export getting 12½ per cent more under 1s. 4d. the Finance member emphasised that nothing whatever was gained by an Indian exporter or by any one else if he received in payment larger number of rupees of less value instead of smaller number of rupees of greater value, if gold or commodity value of what he received remained unaltered. They must remember that under the gold standard and most of the fallacies committed by the Currency League were in talking of rupee in relation to its sterling value. The Finance Member added that whatever the number of rupee received under either ratio, they gave exactly the same power of purchasing commodities in gold values. All that could happen as the result of lower exchange ratio would be that during



the period of instability some suffer and some would make profit and experience showed that it was nearly always the agriculturist on whom the biggest losses fell.

The question then really was whether prices had in a preponderant degree adjusted themselves to 1s. 6d. and, if so, the Currency Commission unanimously was for 1s. 6d. He did not know whether it could be seriously argued to-day that prices had not so adjusted themselves. The case for 1s. 4d. in the minute of dissent of Sir Purshothamdas Thakurdas was entirely based on the argument that adjustment to 1s. 6d. was incomplete and that it was not too late for 1s. 4d. to be chosen instead. Was it not then hard on the Government that after the case for 1s. 6d. had been elaborately told to the world in this minute, the supporters of 1s. 4d. should now entirely shift ground and resort to arguments quite unconvincing and unduly emotional? Admission that prices had adjusted themselves in preponderant degree meant that there was no more reason to-day for disturbing 1s. 6d. ratio than there was for disturbing 1s. 4d. in, say, 1907. The stability of exchange meant more perhaps to the agricultural community than anything else in India. Indeed, it had enabled the agriculturist to get a fair price for his produce. He proved this by stating that in December when the exchange stood at 1s. 3d. gold, the index number of prices for cereals was 105 and for pulses 109, while in January 1927 exchange stood at 1s. 6d. gold and index number for cereals was 143 and pulses 155. Why had the value of good grains gone up in spite of the rise in exchange? The answer was that in times of fluctuations of exchange and general instability of prices the agriculturist found that prices of his produce did not rise in the same proportion to the rise in the prices of things he bought. Stability had restored equilibrium and brought the agriculturist into his own again. Even in the case of cotton, he gave figures to show how unimportant exchange had been as a factor in prices compared with other factors. Thus, in spite of the rise of nearly 5 per cent in the gold value of the rupee, the rupee price of cotton, so far from falling, had risen appreciably.

Concluding, Sir Basil summed in seven interrogations the whole case against 1s. 4d. which would in his opinion mean losses and unrest with permanent benefit to nobody and he asked what possible reason is there why the whole equilibrium reached after painful years of struggle be upset simply that after several years more of suffering and needless losses we may gradually restore a new equilibrium at 1s. 4d. instead of 1s. 6d. without anyone being one bit the better for all intermediary sacrifices?

Pandit MALAVIYA then arose amidst cheers to put the opposition case. Pandit Malaviya regretted that Sir Basil should have confined himself to ratio issue merely. This was not the only question before them. The great question before the House was what was the correct measure of currency reform that the country wanted.

Pandit Malaviya said the matter required a review of the currency history. He quoted the opinion expressed by the Lords of the Treasury in 1879 against the Government of India's currency policy and gave the opinions expressed by Dadabhoy Naorojee and Sir Dinshaw Wacha on the same subject in 1897. A former Finance Member of the Government of India also distinguished the loss of India as against the gain of the Government of India. Pandit Malaviya added: "When the rupee was raised from 13d. to 16d. it was condemned as a monstrous piece of injustice at that time. I am surprised that it is now taken by the Finance Member to-day as a precedent for inflicting another larger injustice on the people of India. When did the people of India, I ask, accept the arrangement which was brought about in 1898?" The speaker then recalled the history connected with the work of the Babington Smith Committee and how the opinion of the majority of this Committee had been found to be wrong and that of Sir Dadiba Dalal was right. Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas urged the Government in 1924 to stabilise the exchange at 1s. 4d. But Sir Basil wanted to continue his manipulation till he could push it up to 1s. 6d. and fiercely and vehemently opposed the plea for a Commission in 1924. When the Currency Commission was appointed its personnel showed that the dice had been loaded for 1s. 6d. and all cries for the addition of at least one more member to the Commission fell on the deaf ears of this irresponsible Government. The report of the Commission proved their fears.

Pandit Malaviya said the Bill was brought up in August when members had not had time to weigh the pros and cons of such a momentous issue and this session, when members were prepared to discuss it and wanted ample time, the Government stood in their way and postponed discussion. Only two days have

now been set apart for a measure of such momentous importance. He had been told by non-official friends that they had to make few speeches and go to voting. The public must resent the decision to force the House to come to a decision in such a short time. Pandit Malaviya next recalled how it was laid down that gold standard reserve should be built out of profits of coinage and that this reserve be utilised for no other purpose than to introduce real gold standard and gold currency in the country. The Hilton Young Commission has entirely ignored this pledge which the Government had given to the people of the country. Sir Basil Blackett too had done a wrong by deflating this reserve to the extent of 3 and half million pounds. The speaker further recalled why the finance department of the Government of India, after putting most seriously before the Commission the proposal for a gold currency, did not stick to it.

Sir Basil Blackett, interrupting, suggested that all this was not relevant to the Bill before the House and would be relevant to Gold Standard and Reserve Bank Bill coming up in September.

Pandit Malaviya submitted that he must show the whole case for the currency reform and why the exchange ratio was injurious without ensuring the establishment of a gold standard and gold currency which the Government of India had themselves suggested to the Commission.

Sir Basil Blackett: The Government of India did not accept that scheme. The Finance department admitted the difficulties in working it out.

Pandit Malaviya held that these difficulties could be got over by the Finance Member with the help of his department and his friends in London. The speaker, while admitting the manly and noble fight of Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas for 1s. 4d., regretted that Sir Purushottamdas did not lay emphasis on gold currency as one cure for India. Thanks to the late Mr. Edwin Montagu, the Government could not now take an executive action. This was the first time in India's history that the currency matter was to be determined by a vote of the House and a vote of the House only.

Mr. Doraiswami Iyengar: What about certification?

Pandit Malaviya: Give that credit to Lord Irwin that he will not certify a measure of such vital importance if opposed by the people's representatives.

Resuming, Pandit Malaviya said if he were told that there was not enough gold to maintain a gold currency, he would repudiate that suggestion. "There is enough gold in India itself to come out to make a success of the gold currency. Only the people must have confidence in your laws and must know that you will not change them suddenly." Sir Basil had, on the other hand, been manipulating the currency and artificially raising the value of the rupee. The Pandit warned him from a shastric text saying that King and Rulers must not lightly tamper with weights and coinage of the country. If to-morrow a seer was declared to mean 18 chhatakas, all purchasers would rejoice. But every producer would suffer and it was no argument to say that because the producer had suffered for two years and had reconciled himself to the wrong position he must be left to continue.

#### APPRECIATED RATIO NOT BENEFICIAL TO INDIA

As Sir Victor Sassoon's speech was intended to be pitted against that of Sir Basil Blackett important extracts from it will be read with interest. Sir VICTOR said: I lay no claim to the title of expert. I am indeed only a humble student of such matters, but my experience in the world of business has shewn that an expert is by no means invariably right. Indeed, I and my interests have suffered considerable losses at times by following the advice of experts; nor is it beyond recollection of many seated here, especially those from Bombay, that even Governments have found that blind pursuit of dicta of experts, however distinguished, has at times led to many losses which have to be met by the unfortunate taxpayer where, however, we in business world have to shoulder large personal losses added to having to face criticism by no means restrained from shareholders anything but sympathetic to the difficulties of commercial management. It is rarely in official world that he who sows seed has not been translated to higher spheres before the day of harvest arrived and criticism of indignant representatives of the people is disarmed at the sight of a newly appointed member of the Government who begs critics to cease crying over split milk and let bygones be bygones, (laughter). In spite of the well-being of the cultivator, I feel myself unable to accept the alluring picture painted by the champions of the 18d rupee and decided to look further afield. It was soon borne in on me that all these advantages of an appreciated ratio,

if beneficial to India, would even more be beneficial to Great Britain in her sterling-dollar exchange and would have been so easily obtained by the country merely following the Government of India's lead by demonetising sovereign and increasing the price in sterling value of her gold. At the same time sterling-dollar exchange could be raised as here by deflation, the manipulator or management continuing until it reached a new gold point when any rising tendency could be stopped by further management of manipulation by increase or as the Finance Member prefers to call it inflation of currency at the new proposed gold point. In my pursuit of truth, it was then that I ran across a pamphlet by Professor Keynes entitled, 'The economic consequences of Mr. Churchill' criticising the British Chancellor of Exchequer not for refraining from following India's example and raising her dollar exchange above pre-war but for raising it by 10 per cent the pre-war parity. Now, Mr. Keynes is termed one of the most brilliant brains of the younger generation. So I think he may be allowed to be quoted against that band of intellectual giants, the supporters of the 1s. 6d. ratio (Laughter). Excerpts from this valuable pamphlet as well as Mr. Keynes' review of the situation a year later are in the hands of members. So, I will restrict myself to pointing out that Mr. Keynes considers that the rise in exchange was in fact a move by the Government to depress wages. I emphasise this point of benefit to those who are interested in labour toils. By turning a profit of 3d. a ton to a loss of 1s. 9d. the action of the British Government was a direct cause of the coal strike with all its unfortunate effects on British trade, but at any rate, the action of the British Government was intended to and did achieve one thing. That was retention of world's money market to that country. I see no such prize falling to India by the Government of India's similar action. I would like particularly to draw the attention of the house to Mr. Keynes' subsequent review a year after where he shows that fall in sterling values of commodities at British ports of 13 per cent made up of 6 per cent drop in world values and 7 per cent drop through exchange that this fall only caused a decrease in the cost of living of 4 per cent. As I have said before only 4 per cent adjustment to the higher ratio took place in a country like England with its highly organised banking methods and competitive system of marketing the world's produce and we who live in a bullock-cart country are asked to believe that barely two years after 1s. 6d. gold ratio was established, we have almost completely adjusted our prices. Let me emphasise too that any advantage that India might hope to expect from an appreciated ratio could be expected in a higher degree in Great Britain owing to her large debt to America and her dependence on foreign supplies of foodstuffs for feeding her people.

#### EFFECT OF RATIO ON THE CULTIVATOR

Now let me take a concrete case of the effect of rise in exchange on a cultivator of producer or export for grower of cotton. If we assume the value of cotton at the point of export as 100 points during the late 1sh. 4d. gold era 2 years ago, an analysis of charges will show that 22 points are required for charges from up-country raw kapas market to the point of export and of the remaining 78 points which the cultivator receives 60 points are swallowed up by production costs including interests leaving a margin or profit of 18 point. Under 1sh. 6d. ratio the 100 becomes 87 1/2. The charges are the same, so that 18 point profit becomes only 5 1/2. The House will see that the unfortunate cultivator has his profit reduced not by one-eighth but by two-thirds. I have taken the cotton grower because he has been having a better time in the past than other cultivators. The price he has had for his product has been proportionately higher than average rise in other commodities with the result that until last year, he was able to pay off his debts and put a little by. But what is his position to-day? He has seen over 50 per cent drop in world prices. In any case, he could not with present costs of production make a profit and yet he is forced to take one-eighth less for his product at the port of shipment (not at his market) or allow consumers in this country to import American cotton for their needs. What can be the result for him except to sink back into the clutches of the sowcar? And he is told that the Government has announced through its Finance Member that the cultivator suffers no net loss.

Now from the cost of living figures I gave the other day some interesting deductions can be made. Our arguments with reference to cultivators outside those whose produce prices are directly affected by world prices were based on Government's assumption that internal prices for kindred articles had adjusted themselves and that

there was in consequence an appreciable drop in the cost of living though we had always fought the statement that adjustment was substantial. If, however, drop in cost of living is negligible—those figures showed it—it follows that those cultivators who are not growing produce for export have not yet adjusted their prices to 1sh. 6d. rupee and so are no worse off and that to my mind is the answer to the statement that is often made that the large body of cultivators have not felt the pinch yet. They have not lost because there has been no adjustment or drop in the prices they receive. But if there has not yet been an adjustment, the whole of the case for 1sh. 6d. falls to the ground. Look through the evidence given before the Currency Commission. The witness concurs with the higher ratio on the assumption that all prices had substantially adjusted themselves. So all the painful process of adjustment has still to come and Government's advantages in direct increased taxation is falling entirely on those producers of commodities in direct competition with foreign imports. Give us back our 1sh. 4d. rupee and prices will only rise in those imported commodities of which we are told only 7 per cent consumed is by the agriculturists and in home produce directly competitive with them and these items form a very small part of the total cost of living budget. I admit Sir, that something will cost more though none will cost full 11 per cent to the consumer because he pays retail and not C. I. F. prices. I admit that your whisky will cost you more (laughter) but I do not admit that a man can live on whisky alone, nay, not even if he be a Scot (laughter) and in any case large commitments have been made for forward delivery and exchange is fixed for these commitments and competition among importers will allow prices to rise materially until those stocks need to be replaced and for all we know by the time they need to be replaced, world's prices may have fallen so that in spite of the lower exchange they may cost no more in rupees, for remember that some expert, like Mr. Kitchen, foreshadow a substantial fall in world's prices during the next few years and though I do not think that they will fall by full 40 per cent that has been mentioned, still it does look likely that we are now in a period similar to the last 25 years of the last century and must look forward to a definite drop in world prices.

#### ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF 1s. 6d.

So much for the bogey of rising prices if we return to gold ratio. Now, Sir, let me try to sum up the advantages and disadvantage of the higher ratio. Firstly, among the agriculturists at present only those growing an export commodity are suffering, but when general adjustment takes place then all must suffer during the painful period. Secondly wage-earners have not found any appreciable advantages in the higher ratio because they only get an advantage through a drop in the general cost of living and in some case such as employees of trading and manufacturing concerns an era of depression means a reduction of staff and consequent unemployment to a number of unfortunate family men. Thirdly, we get an advantage to Government finances which is a very real one despite the fact that budgetary consideration were not in the Finance Member's mind when fixing on what rates we should have now in attempting to estimate the price to be paid for the very real advantage that the Hon. Member has received.

There is a quite definite difficulty which has, I think, been the cause of so many perfectly true statements appearing conflicting. I have tried to analyse this phenomena and consider that it is due to a lack of clearness in laying down a fundamental premise or assumption. We must either view the problem on the assumption that cost of living and prices have for all practical purposes adjusted themselves or on the contrary the assumption that there is a large mal-adjustment. So as to show the House how easily one can fall into error by mixing up the two assumptions let me begin by criticising one of my statements. The other day I was pointing out differences in debt that the country was burdened with under the two ratios. I was entirely right when I stated that under the higher ratio, the country had to pay 491 crores grains of gold more than under the lower one. But in saying this I omitted to say that I was accepting the Government assumption of substantial adjustment.

The burden of the country which is in gold can be stated either as grains of gold or as 65 crores odd of 1sh. 4d. rupee or Rs. 57 crores odd. of 1sh. 6d. rupee or 43 millions odd of sovereigns. But this burden would actually only be felt by those whose financial existence had only partially adjusted itself to the new ratio. The grower of bajri for instance get the same amount of rupees for his product under 1sh. 6d. as under 1sh. 4d. If in fact the gold value of his product is raised with

his taxation and his expenditure, he is no worse off practically even though his taxation has been raised. The Government only gains where prices have adjusted themselves. Where it pays the same gold value as before, it can not gain in salaries as these, having the same rupee cost, have been raised equally in terms of gold. In other words, if as I maintain general cost of living has not gone down, if, as I hold, the price of commodities in the country with certain exceptions is as high as before, if, therefore, the rest has all risen in terms of gold, then admittedly the advantage to the government and the burden to people is limited to the home charges and purchases of imported goods less lower custom duties the Government may receive. Now, who pays for this advantages and who shares in it? It is only temporary as it only lasts during the period of adjustment and we are assuming with a certainty regarding which, I admit, I still have my doubts. What are these remittances. They are invisible imports as they represent services received just as all remittances represent either commodities or service received into this country. They, therefore, have all got to be paid for any advantage derived by imports is counter-balanced by an equal disadvantage suffered by exports. As I have shown there is only an advantage when prices which include wages have not adjusted themselves. Now it has been estimated that the gross short fall in rupees suffered by exports is in the neighbourhood of Rs. 40 to 45 crores a year and therefore this is one which must pay for any advantages that may be received by imports. These advantages whether received by the Government or otherwise are paid for at the expense of producers of exports. So, it is on this portion of the population that the whole burden falls, on this class that benefits only microscopically as consumers of imports.

#### RISE IN EXPENDITURE IN TERMS OF GOLD

I now turn to the argument which the Hon. the Finance Member on Friday last stated he had some difficulty in following. I refer to the statement that though the Government took credit for a lower rupee figure of expenditure in 1927-28 compared with 1923-24 when the Hon. Member first took charge of the finances of this country, the gold value of rupees extracted from the taxpayer had increased. In 1923-24 the Government took the equivalent of 97 millions odd sovereigns from the taxpayer. The following year, after the efforts of the Incheape Committee, the equivalent number of sovereigns was reduced to 78·8 millions. In 1927-28 the Government estimates of revenue was equivalent to 93·9 million sovereigns or over 15 million sovereigns more than in the year following the efforts of the Incheape Committee or 6·6 millions more than the figure that the Committee set out to reduce. The Finance Member has asked us not to ignore any difference in the commodity value of gold. I will not ignore it.

If the House will look at Vol. II of Appendices to the Royal Commission's Report, page 33, it will see that at the budget time in 1923, that is, in March 1923, U. S. A. price index figure is 159. Now look at June 1925 on page 34, U. S. A. price index is 157, a drop of 2 points. Mr. Keynes's article of June 2nd 1926 in *The New Republic* gives the drop of U. S. A. wholesale prices during the year previous, that is, between June 1925 and June 1926 as 6 points, a total drop, therefore, of 8 points since March 1923. How does the Hon'ble Finance Member justify the rise in expenditure of the equivalent of 15 million sovereigns of 1926-27 over 1924-25 when gold commodity price in that period has dropped?

Sir Basil Blackett : I have explained it in another place on Saturday last.

Sir Victor Sassoon : I could explain it and I propose to explain it here. I could explain it by saying that the reason why the Hon'ble Member has had to raise the gold value of his expenditure is because prices in India have not adjusted themselves to 18d. ratio and he has, therefore, had to pay an increased gold price for everything or at any rate for a great deal of his expenditure outside home charges.

Sir Basil Blackett : Has the Hon'ble Member seen my statement in another place that we had spent more?

Sir Victor : I have not. I am afraid I was not present at the other place. It would be very interesting to hear how it is although arithmetical sum says that we have spent fifteen millions more and gold prices have dropped in the period. I should have thought that the Finance Member might have pointed out in his budget speech that there was an apparent rise in expenditure and he might have explained it there.

Sir Basil : I did.

Sir Victor : I think the main reason is that whatever he may have said in another place he has not been able to reduce his expenditure in this country because prices have not adjusted themselves to 1sh. 6d. ratio. The Hon'ble Member will not say that. He dare not say that because if he did say that, he would be removing the very foundation on which the whole of the edifice of 1sh. 6d. has been so painfully erected and it will come crashing to the ground.

Incidentally the Hon'ble Member said if it could be shown to him that prices have not adjusted themselves he would go into 1sh. 4d. lobby. As the cost of living has not gone down appreciably and as I take it that prices of commodities decides rent and taxes do form part of the cost of living figure I have every hope of seeing the Finance Member in 1sh. 4d. lobby (laughter).

The Hon'ble Member also accused me the other day of wishing to wipe out the debt by inflating currency after the example of Germany. When he took charge of the Finance Department, exchange was at 1sh. 3d. gold according to his own statement. I have never criticised the Finance Member's action in manipulating or managing currency to raise the rupee from 1sh. 3d. gold to 1sh. 4d. gold. I have merely protested against raising that figure above 1sh. 4d. gold. Further, I ask this House to pause and consider for a minute whether it is likely that if all people would support a policy of repudiation of public debts. So it all comes down to this. Are we to burden that portion of the community which exports commodities for the advantage of the Government and creditors? Are we to decide to make the whole country endure the painful process of adjustment to 1sh. 6d. rupee which has yet to take place or are we to ask the Government of this country, both imperial and provincial, to readjust their budgets to the old ratio and give up some of the advantage that they have received during the last 2 years. At any rate, one thing I do feel convinced, and that is that if we are to return to the lower ratio, there is no one who can give us back our 1sh. 4d. rupee more economically than can the Finance Member. However much we may criticise his policy in certain directions, however much we may deplore a tendency to twist words to suit his subsequent views instead of taking the meaning accepted generally when they were spoken, not one of us, I feel sure, will deny that technical re-organisation of whole of the finances and Finance Department of this Government, a reorganisation which is entirely due to the genius and industry of Sir Basil Blackett. No one will deny that this is a lasting heritage for which India will ever be in his debt. I am a sincere believer that 1sh. 4d. will be best for India as a permanent ratio but I will tell the House that I do see in a return to it a possible slight dislocation not of trade and commerce of this country but of the financial arrangements of the Government. But knowing as I do how the British civil servant will always give his best regardless of his personal views I have a feeling of confidence, should a return to 1sh. 4d. ratio be eventually decided on, that we can rely on the knowledge, integrity and loyalty of the Hon. the Finance Member to make the necessary changes without any untoward disturbance. (Applause.)

Sir P. THAKURDAS rose amidst non-official cheers and spoke for over an hour in support mainly of 1s. 4d. ratio. He said he had taken a note of the criticisms here and elsewhere. He had as a member of the Currency Commission supported the introduction of a gold standard but did not support a gold currency. He would certainly explain his position when this question would come up before the House. In connection with the Bill, the Finance Member some time ago had remarked that the question of ratio was a minor one; how then had he suddenly found it important and wished to stabilise it? He (Sir P. Thakurdas) wanted this to be decided by representatives of the people in this Assembly. Dr. Macphail had talked of the appreciated and depreciated rupee; but was Dr. Macphail aware that this rupee was deliberately pushed up by the Government of India from 1s. 4d. after the Reserve Councils misfortune and that all through after the Fowler Committee report, the policy evolved by the executive was at variance with the recommendations of that Committee? In accordance with that policy, the country was filled with silver coinage and gold was removed from this country in spite of the protests of a strong Viceroy like Lord Curzon and taken away to England during the war. There was a balance of trade in favour of India and no gold could come. Then there was the Babington Smith Committee report with Sir D. Dalal's minute of dissent which was a monumental document. The committee took care to remark that even if the world fell, its recommendations should not be revised and the tragedy was that from the day 1s. 4d. was removed from the statute, that 1s. 4d. was the prevailing rate ever

since then. Automatic currency had been cut off and the Government of India had been the sole judges of the rate at which exchange would prevail. In allowing two shillings to go on into the Statute the Government had no other object except to push the ratio to a point which they wanted. If the Government of India did not push the exchange and left it uncontrolled there would not have been any difficulty, but the Government indulged in manipulating the currency. They pushed the rupee up. Was there any country in the world which did like this?

Sir Basil Blackett :—Siam.

Sir Purshothamdas :—Siam and India are not comparable to each other. He publicly acknowledged the fact that the Finance Member did ask the India Office to stop short of the mad course. However, what was the present position? India had no trust in the Government policy regarding exchange and so India wanted a gold currency because then she could be sure of the full value of the coin. It was regrettable that on this question an eminent financier like Sir Basil could not see with Indians. If the Government now persisted in carrying 1s. 6d. ratio and in doing anything against 1s. 4d. then it would be one more dismal chapter to those already there. Did Dr. Macphail realise that if 1s. 4d. was put on the Statute the mills have to pay more for their raw produce and by this higher ratio they rather hit the best and the only consumer of Indian mills, namely, the masses of the lower middle classes. Was it not right then that even the selfish millowners should get up and say that this was wrong policy? What did Europeans know of the poor masses? (Cries of Oh, Oh). He quoted the views of a writer in "The Indian Daily Mail" who said that by the higher ratio agriculturists were hard hit and there were scarcity and famine.

The argument of the Finance Member as regards wages was exaggerated. Then again Dr. Macphail had said that people with fixed income would suffer. In the laws of economics it was the tiller of the soil who would suffer. As for Sir Basil Blackett's argument of strikes in case of 1s. 4d. Sir P. Thakurdas said that nothing would lead to strikes more surely and more unmistakably than if they pushed through 1s. 6d. ratio and stabilised it.

#### QUESTIONS TO THE FINANCE MEMBER.

Sir Basil had talked of eleven points. He would reserve his answer to these eleven points. Is it a fact that no other major country had its currency appreciated beyond its pre-war value and, if so, what is the excuse for India being given this special treatment regarding her currency? Secondly, is it a fact that the working of this ratio has been feasible owing to insistence of the Government to leave an ineffective ratio on the Statute Book which prevented gold from being tendered to the currency authority in India? and this was done in spite of protests from the Indian commercial community ever since 1922. Thirdly, is it a fact that this process has been further hastened by the Government's starving the country of her normal expansion of currency and during 1926-27 actually deflating currency? If the reply be in the affirmative, will the Finance Member give the figures? Fourthly, is there any country which can be quoted as a precedent for this normal insistence of the Government to keep the ineffective ratio on the Statute Book and keeping out gold as a tender of currency authority and the persistence of the Government in starving the country of normal expansion of currency? Fifthly, will the Government lay on the table a statement of the amount of a deflation and show the amount of expansion of currency which has been effected up-to-date and, lastly, what is the basis of figure of production in the price level on which the Finance Member justified compulsory non-expansion of currency and his policy of deflation of currency.

Continuing Sir P. Thakurdas said that they asked for 1s. 4d. because this was on the Statute Book till 1914 and India's currency was the only currency in the world which got the least disturbed during the war, because India wanted 1s. 4d. as they did not want to be unfair to creditors. It was in bringing gold from the international market to India that Sir Basil intervened and by fixing a ratio of 1s. 6d. he prevented sovereigns from being converted into Rs. 15 and compelled every man in India to be satisfied with Rs. 13-5-4 and took a part for his so called surplus budget and obliged contributions and gave the rest to those who wanted to remit money outside. If the Government of India were prepared to give a gold currency, then it would affect the debts outstanding up to date. Until that time there would be injustice to the masses by not reverting to 1s. 4d. and by stabilising at 1s. 6d. The internal trade of India was about 15 times the import and export of

England and if England took two years for complete adjustment of its trade, then surely India could not take less than ten years.

Sir Basil had asked as to what was the sanctity in 1s. 4d. ratio and whether it was not a question of sentiment. But a gold standard and gold currency was India's birthright and she was determined to have it. "We are anxious that you should not have it at the inconvenience of England disturbing European conditions", but I ask, is it the intention of the Government of India and the India Office that until we can take from them a gold standard and gold currency they are slowly giving us promotion from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d. and to 1s. 10d. and then to 2s? Unless there is sanctity attached to the question of ratio, I have not the least doubt that in order to bolster up Government budgets, avoid further taxation and make up for increasing expenditure of all kinds, we shall be slowly drifting into a higher appreciation of rupees and further grinding down of the masses. This is a thing which no Indian who has studied the problem would think of with equanimity. If in 1920 the Babington Smith Committee had been a little less greedy and a little more discreet they might have got through 1s. 6d. : but there was God above, they become greedy and two shilling failed. Now the Government has done a wise thing and want to give promotions step by step. I am sure the Viceroy will never do it. Let the Executive do what they like. No Indian will agree to a course which has no precedents in any other country and which every economist of the last century has run down in language which I can hardly imitate. I support the motion for consideration and hope when the amendment comes before the House, you will vote for 1s. 4d."

It was 5-30 p.m. and on the President's suggestion agreed to by all members of the House that the motion to take the bill into consideration be put, Sir Basil having waived his right of reply, the house agreed unanimously to take the bill into consideration and then adjourned.

On the 8th MARCH, after interpellations on the Bengal detenus, the House proceeded to discuss the Currency Bill.

The President ruled that the amendments raised two questions : (1) The gold standard and gold currency, and (2) the exchange ratio. These questions could be discussed independently and he would first take up the question of ratio and if 1s. 6d. were adopted he would allow any changes necessary in other amendments provided they were admissible. Mr. Jinnadas MEHTA then moved his amendment to Clause 4 to introduce 1s 4d. ratio in place of 1s. 6d. by substituting for Rs. 21-13-10, Rs. 13-14-4 as the value of one tola fine gold.

Mr. Jinnadas first criticised the personnel of the Currency Commission and declared that all but Sir Purshottamdas were Government's henchmen and were put forward as experts to uphold Sir Basil's theory. How could the opinion of such a body weigh with the House? The Commission merely stated, never mind what steps were taken, 1s. 6d. ratio had become de facto and must be accepted.

Mr. Joshi : Does my Hon. friend suggest that if we reach the right place by the wrong path, we should get back to traverse the right path to the right place?

Mr. Jinnadas : Yes, I will, if there is time enough and there is time in this instance. This Commission's report, I repeat, merely registers the Government decree. Even my friend Rao Bahadur Shammurayan Singh could have written it.

Sir Basil : Or, even Mr. Jinnadas Mehta. (Laughter).

Mr. Jinnadas : No, I would not have written it. (Laughter). Continuing, the speaker felt that Mr. Vakil's book should have been the last for Sir Basil to rely on to prove that adjustment of prices had taken place. Mr. Vakil had referred to the adjustment merely of commodities which India exported but what about other adjustments? Something like 70 crores were paid out in salaries under the general railway and military budget. Had this payment been brought down to 60 crores, that would mean adjustment. (Hear, hear). "Are the members opposite prepared to give away even a copper coin from their high salaries?"

Mr. K. Ahmed : "What about your 20 rupees daily allowance? (Laughter.)

Mr. Jinnadas : I am prepared to give 12 and half per cent of that. (Renewed laughter). The only gentleman whose salary should be excluded from this is the Viceroy because he arrived in India and took up the appointment when the rate of exchange was 1s 4d." Continuing, Mr. Jinnadas held that the appendix giving the cable correspondence between the Government of India and the Secretary of State had clearly established that in October 1924, the Government had made up its mind to fix 1s. 6d. and confessed that its recent action in manipulating currency towards that end was becoming generally known.



The speaker next contended that about 35 crores of rupees were removed every year by foreign investors in India in the form of profits. These people would reap the harvest to the extent of four crores under 1s. 6d. Three to four crores profit was made by the Government of India over the exchange and the rest of the profit went into the pockets of importers. This was how thirty to forty crores of annual loss to the country was being distributed among those who profited at India being mulcted.

As regards India's debt the Finance Member had made mere assertions which were misleading and the speaker paid an eloquent tribute to the services of Mr. B. F. Madon in preparing the statement which exposed the Government case and proved India's loss.

Mr. Jammadas declared that for every rupee of external debt India would be paying one grain of gold more than if the ratio were 1s. 4d. His reply to Dr. Macphail and Sir Basil about the payment of debts was that a bond was a bond and must be paid according to contract, but when a bond was discharged the commodity value of the time when the bond was contracted or the ratio would not and could never be taken into consideration either in individual or national transaction. By trying to raise the ratio by two pence, Sir Basil was increasing India's external debt by four crores pounds. There was yet another wrong done to this country, Mr. Madon had shown that nominally the Government of India's expenditure had gone down. It had gone up in terms of gold and by this process additional expenditure of 52 millions of gold had been taken from people of this country. In the last four years this was nothing less than a repetition of the tragedy of appreciation of the rupee to 1s. 4d. which Mr. Gokhale had protested against in 1902. This parallel tragedy shows that whether there is a gentleman of international reputation or an unknown person as the Finance Member, the parallel fact exists that there is concealed taxation without the people knowing it. This was a subterfuge resorted to when in 1902 also there was seen a phenomenal optimism of the Secretary of State that this country was prosperous. What had the Finance Member to say to this?

Sir Basil : I have already replied.

Mr. Jammadas : You may in words. You have to prove it and I say place this memorandum of ours before any committee of independent experts and the Finance Member will be condemned. Then again, the evils of the higher rate of exchange had been given in words of blood not by an agitator or currency league but by Sir Basil himself in his evidence before the Currency Commission.

Mr. Jammadas, resuming, averred that the surplus should be the result of the growing prosperity of the country and not a profit from the exchange. They were told that the prices were going down. Yet the cost of civil and Military administration was rising yearly. On the civil side alone from 59 millions in 1924-1925, the cost went up to 90 millions in 1925-1926 and threatened to run up to 84 millions in the budget year. On the military side, the reduction of seven crores was shown while in fact the costs had risen from 338 millions to 342 millions. Mr. Jammadas resumed his seat after speaking for an hour.

Sir Walter WILSON (Associated Chamber of Commerce), opposing Mr. Jammadas's amendment, referred to the report of the Currency Commission where Sir Purushotamdas Thakurdas had himself agreed to the unanimous view that if it could be shown that prices had to a preponderating degree adjusted themselves to the existing de facto ratio, then that ratio must be adhered to.

Sir Purushotamdas : You will also read the minute of dissent.

Sir Walter Wilson : It is generally admitted that in the long run it is of no consequence whether the rate is fixed at 1s. 4d. or 1s. 6d., because in the end the prices have to adjust themselves to the ratio. It is true that the cost of living has not appreciably fallen since the rate rose to 1s. 6d. But you must look into the calculations here. You must take the Calcutta figures which are more reliable and not the Bombay figures. Sir Walter Wilson quoted the prices of cereals and showed that the prices had adjusted themselves to the existing ratio.

Discussing the position of the ryot under 1s. 6d. he quoted that in case of rice, for example, only eight per cent of the total crop was exported and so the balance of 92 must be borne by the wage-earners, middle classes and clerks in this country. So also in the case of wheat. Only a small portion of the extra rupees were received outside India. The European in this country with the exception of a few were all in favour of 1s. 6d. When they were trying to fix the ratio, it was better that they should do so in the neighbourhood of the existing

rate than make any drastic upheaval and put it upon another basis with all the dislocation it was bound to cause.

Mr. Chalmers of Assam might not agree to 1s. 6d. but the Indian Tea Association of Assam was definitely for 1s. 6d. and the Association would have supported 1s. 6d. if they were convinced that they would gain under it. The Bengal National Chamber of Commerce of which Mr. Birla was a member had sent a telegram through its Secretary favouring 1s. 6d. This Chamber was all these months for 1s. 4d. and now it had come round to the view that 1s. 6d. is the best.

Mr. JINNAH on rising to speak quoted the opinion of a learned authority that skilled witnesses came with such bias that hardly any weight should be given to them. The past history of the currency policy in India was nurtured in inequity and immorality, but he was prepared to judge the issue divested of its past. He would be in the position of a jury. He asked what happened with regard to the Babington Smith Report. Those experts reported and the Government accepted the recommendations. India suffered crores and it was said that it was a colossal blunder. It might be said that Sir Basil was a genius, but could not Sir Basil be misguided. When this House wanted a commission, the Government did not respond and later the Government packed a commission. The bedrock of this Commission's report was that prices had adjusted themselves and if it could be proved that this was so, the case of 1s. 6d. would be established, but he held that the evidence before the Currency Commission was most cursory. (A voice: No.) Mr. Jinnah: I say it is most cursory and most perfunctory and if a judgment were given in a high court on such evidence it will be upset in five minutes. (Applause.) If you think experts have reported and their views must be accepted, then why come to this legislature for its opinion.

Mr. Jinnah, continuing, said Mr. Vakil's book had shown that exchange has been made by Sir Basil to determine prices by conscious control. But the speaker asked whether the commission had proved that prices had adjusted themselves. The Commission confessed there was no accurate statistics of prices and that there was much less reliable material regarding wages. And yet, they were told that prices had adjusted themselves and that wages would be hit by going back to 1s. 4d. (Laughter.) Mr. Jinnah further read extracts from the cabled correspondence between Delhi and Whitehall. This shows the Secretary of State has been goading and bullying the Finance Member. I am prepared to give the devil his due (Loud laughter, in which Sir Basil joined). It must be said to his credit that his conscience revolted against it and that he did not indulge in artificial manipulation beyond 1s. 6d. (Hear, hear.) To that extent India owes him a debt of gratitude. (Sir Basil made a bow and the House laughed.) Mr. Kikabhai Premchand had said that either ratio would not make substantial difference to Government exchequer. If that was so, why talk of dislocation of finances?

Sir Basil: You are misquoting him.

Mr. Jinnah: The Hon'ble Member holds an important position in the commercial world and can take care of himself without Sir Basil's defence.

Addressing the labour members of the House, Mr. Jinnah told them that as one who was not a capitalist and whose sympathy and support for the labour cause was always there. He would beg them to remember that if India was to become a strong modern living nation, it could be only through capital, commerce and industry. "You cannot get blood out of stone. Mr. Ford of U. S. A. can buy to-day the whole of Bombay including Sir Victor Sassoon. (Laughter.) I understand that England's vital interests require her keeping her markets. But you do not pull down whatever little there is in this country in the way of commerce and industry. Look to what Mr. Kay has said. I say, do not kill the goose that lays the golden egg. (The Finance Member questioned).

Mr. Jinnah addressing Sir Basil: That is what you are going to do, so that your goose across the water may be safe. (Hear, hear.) I have no hesitation in saying that I am sorry for Sir Basil. I pity him as he is only one of the instruments in the hands of a very powerful vested interest in Great Britain. Let this House do not go wrong. I know the lobbies are busy, that manipulations are going on but remember that every one of you is here as representative of your people. Remember you have undertaken this sacred duty. Your interests are second to those of your constituents. I ask you as hon'ble men, as representing your people that you are pledged by every constitutional doctrine, by every moral consideration to put the interest of your country above your own interest. If you have got to sacrifice, you have got to suffer,

to give up your jobs, titles (Mr. Goswami : Your nominated seats), give them up but do not sell India and if you do you will be degrading the representative character of this House. (Loud and prolonged applause).

Mr. Srinivasa IYENGAR was in agreement with the views of those who argued for 1s. 4d. ratio. Every one was groping in the dark, but there was no such thing as the view of experts which could be relied upon and which could be considered as axiomatic. Sir Basil's eleven points had no relevancy upon the decision of this particular ratio question. There was no such thing as permanency of ratio, but he was sure that large Indian interests were served by 1s. 4d. more than by 1s. 6d. "I confess I am biased but I am biased in favour of Indian interest. Let us be just to ourselves before we can be generous to the English importers. There is no question that producers, Indian manufactures and industries will be benefitted by 1s. 4d. ratio. I myself examined the ratio question with bias against capitalists, particularly in Bombay, but have come to the conclusion that we should not divide ourselves as capitalists and labourers and as industrialist and producers. I am for 1s. 4d. because I love labour more than I love the capitalist. Mr. Macwatters, who was Secretary to the Finance Department, had in his memorandum admitted that lowering exchange would give advantage to agriculturists. "What then is the use of going against this admitted view of the Government." But now the Government are fighting tooth and nail for 1s. 6d. because the English business interests are up.

Sir P. THAKURDAS vigorously defended 1s. 4d. ratio and replied to all the eleven points of Sir Basil Blackett and demanded an answer to his questions. He expressed his regret that Mr. Kikabhai Premchand should have allowed himself to be drifted into politics to be used as an instrument for 1s. 6d. and his regret was all the more that he came from the family of Roychand Premchand which was a name still to be conjured with. He told Mr. Kikabhai that 1s. 6d. was not a nocturnal adventure but 1s. 6d. was a broad day loot in the guise of exchange. Referring to Sir Walter Wilson, he declared that the opposition was that of the Associated Chambers who voiced European opinion which was diametrically opposed to that of Indian Chambers. As for Bengal National Chamber, this body had declared itself before the Currency Commission for 1s. 4d. He would not accept its change of opinion without ascertaining the position further. Finally, Sir Purshottamdas told the House that he was to-day relieved of the grave responsibility he was carrying on his shoulders in carrying the movement in support of 1s. 4d. "I am relieved of that responsibility to-day by handing it over to the more capable hands of the Assembly. The House has before it the strong protest of Mr. Gokhale against similar action of Government. Responsibility will no longer be mine and will rest with the House. If the House votes against the amendment it will be on its own responsibility and my only regret will be that the House did not rise to the occasion and realise its full responsibility." (Applause).

#### AMENDMENT DEFEATED

It was now 5-30 p. m. and closure was moved. The President pointed out that if he accepted it, Sir Basil Blackett would have no right of reply. Sir Basil said he did not want to reply. Dr. Gour protested that a number of speakers were waiting patiently for their turn. The President said he had been told that both sides were agreed. The motion for closure was then put and agreed to and the House divided on the amendment of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. Tense excitement followed and thundering cheers from official benches when they succeeded in rejecting 1s. 4d. amendment by 68 against 65 votes. Mr. Taritbhushan Roy alone remained neutral. Thus out of 140 members who were sworn in out of 143, to-day's debate had attracted 134, being the largest attendance on any business sitting of the Assembly ever since the reformed House came into being.

## Demands for Grants

### THE EXECUTIVE DEMAND.

On the 9th MARCH the House took up demands for grants. The Hon'ble Sir Basil Blackett moved the demand for Rs. 60,000 under "Executive Council."

Mr. Jayakar, deputy leader of the National Party, moved total omission of the grant.

Sir Basil Blackett objected to this as it was a purely negative motion and was therefore out of order.

Mr. Jayakar, contented that the motion was in order as the Government of India Act permitted "reduction of the whole grant."

The Hon'ble the President, after hearing Mr. Jayakar, ruled that he had given full consideration to the question and had also looked into the practice of the House of Commons. Though the Government of India Act 67 (A) was misleading on the subject, 72 (E) made it clear that the Statute did not specifically permit this Assembly to omit the grant though he did not understand why the same words were not inserted in the case of the Assembly as in the case of Provincial Councils.

Sir Hari Singh Gour submitted his motion that the votable portion of the demand be entirely omitted.

The President ruled it out, as the demand was only for the votable items. (Laughter). The President said that he found himself in a difficulty as to which amendment should be taken up. Mr. Jayakar wanted to reduce it to one rupee. Mr. Srenivasa Iyengar wanted to reduce the demand to six pies, Mr. Kelkar to three pies and Mr. Acharya to one pie. (Laughter). He wished there had been cohesion among non-officials in this matter. However, he would call on Mr. Jayakar to move his cut to reduce the demand to rupee one.

Sir Basil Blackett submitted that this motion virtually negatived the grant and deprived other members to move cuts to raise questions of policy. He suggested the House should for the sake of convenience set up a convention as to the figure below which the demand can be reduced.

The President ruled that while technically every cut however big was admissible, he would suggest that a convention be established that as in the case of Railway Board no demand be reduced by a motion below Rs. 100 so that others could move one rupee cut. This, however, was a suggestion for the future, but did not concern the House to-day.

#### MR. JAYAKAR'S AMENDMENT

Mr. JAYAKAR then, amidst applause, moved his cut which was to reduce the demand for the Executive Council to Re. 1. Mr. Jayakar made an impressive speech.

Mr. Jayakar said for the time being he was the spokesman of non-official benches. He traced the history of the constitutional demand from Pandit Motilal Nehru's resolution in the old Assembly for a round table conference. They asked for bread and stone was offered, namely, the Muddiman Committee. The terms of reference of the committee were complained about. But the committee sat on and brought out a report they had all expected. For instance, in Bombay they wanted Land Revenue and Justice to be transferred to Ministers. But instead, they got gas and boiler, as if there was not enough gas in the non-officials and as if there was not enough boiling in the country. As Mr. Das truly said at Faridpur, it all showed the distrust of the Ministers. A lady friend of his who had been watching the debates in the Bombay Legislative Council told him one day summing up her views on diarchy as follows: "A husband and wife began to set a house together. The wife said to the husband, 'we have three hundred rupees a month. We shall divide this in the proportion of two to one. You will keep the one hundred and I shall keep the two hundred. I shall employ all the servants and look after their pomp and pageant and they will be amenable to my behests. I shall spend this two hundred on my toilet and hair dressing and you manage with your one hundred all the twelve children, we both managed to produce and, when we both appear in society, our responsibility will be joint and undivided and you must not complain to the outside world.' This is your diarchy." (Laughter.)

Proceeding Mr. Jayakar said this diarchy was absolutely unworkable. This was said by the minority of the Muddiman Committee. But the Government kept the country feeding on false promise and demanding more and more co-operation and the more co-operation was given still more co-operation was demanded. Mr. C. R. Das, in his Faridpur speech, went to the length of saying, "provided some real responsibility is transferred to the people there is no reason why we should not co-operate." In making this offer, he went to the utmost limits. But there was no response from the Government and, what more, the Swaraj Party went further. They put their best man in the chair of the Assembly and some of the Swarajists even courted unpopularity and divorced themselves from their life-long friend in order to give co-operation, they were called sycophants and place-hunters. They bore all this calumny and offered co-operation by saying that, if sufficient responsibility and initiative was given to the Ministers they were prepared to accept

offices and co-operate with the Government and the Government still stood supreme and ignored what was happening in the country. Even the Indian National Congress had given the Government enough indication when even during the last six weeks they had been here. This session they had behaved in a most parliamentary way and even at the risk of great provocation did not behave otherwise. What was the attitude of Sir Basil yesterday? He did not reply to the charge of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta and others that the Government were creating a false surplus and concealing the burden of taxation in inflating the ratio.

Sir Basil: The charge was made both here and in the Council of State and I answered the charge in the Council of State. The proceedings are in the hands of members.

Mr. Jayakar maintained that the Government valued its votes more than its reputation. The power of the Government was growing, because the votable portion of the budget was slowly being converted into non-votable. Last year they could deprive an officer of his establishment and have control over his household allowances. But now that too was gone. Even the carpet expense was non-votable. The gravamen of his charge was that the Government had not in any manner responded to the gesture of co-operation. They had gone on taking advantage of the mood of the people, divided as they already were to entrench themselves more strongly. Indeed, the tide had gone the other way as yesterday's voting on the ratio question showed. "We do not feel there is any reality in this House. This divinity (the Government) is absolutely intractable. What is the use of our coming every year on this political pilgrimage? The last point has been reached. If the Government do not yield now we shall have to think of going back and turn to some other methods of forcing the Government to yield to the popular feeling. (Congress Party, loud cheers.) I know we are powerless, because we are divided and weak. But beware of the anger of a weak man. Unless you change your ways, other things may happen in this country."

Sir Basil BLACKETT, replying to Mr. Jayakar's complaint, said the reasons why he did not answer the criticism referred to were firstly, because both sides of the House were anxious to come to a decision on the matter on which a decision had become of very great importance to India: secondly, because the course of the debate was getting away from the ratio question to the direction of racial question and thirdly, because arguments used by Mr. Jamnadas could be only properly treated by being ignored and, fourthly no argument had been advanced which had not been previously fully dealt with. On a particular case he had given his reply in the Council and he would state it here now.

The President intervened and told the member that he had already given his reasons for not replying yesterday and that a reply to-day would not be in order.

Sir Basil, thereupon, used the opportunity of speaking briefly on the constitutional debate. The motion was to omit the grant for travelling expenses. (Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar: No. Your travelling is non-votable). Sir Basil added that members of the Executive Council did not receive travelling allowance but had tour expenses. That was why in spite of the amendment of the Government of India Act two years ago they were votable. If the cut were carried, public interests would suffer. Some of the speeches made yesterday showed that the House was very much in need of virtues of faith, hope and charity or love. The Viceroy had told them in opening the session that powers of legislatures in the dominions and elsewhere were increased by their tacitly assuming that they had more responsibility than was given by statute. The result of this assumption was that the executive powers which existed went into disuse and were after a time abolished. But neither this House nor the Government would be prepared to say that condition of affairs under the reforms was such as to make them all thoroughly comfortable. Perhaps, members did not realise there were very considerable mental discomforts under the present position not merely for them but also for the Government and the Government servants. They were trying to do a very difficult thing and they need hope, faith and love if they were to make advance towards a definite goal. Members took little delight in refusing to look with hope and in not showing an act of charity that they were trying to work towards a definite result and if members looked back 10 or 20 years they would find that considerable advance had been registered and was being daily registered (applause). There was Indianisation of departments and a great change in the composition of the Central Legislature did not possess complete responsible Government but he maintained there has been enormous change in the extent to which people's

representatives could and did influence every action and policy of the Government. He came out to India with a hope of contributing his share to the development of the reforms in the matter of the control of the legislature over the spending power of the Government and members would admit that in this matter there has been a tremendous improvement in the machinery by which the House exercised its control and he added that in his opinion, the finances of the Government had very greatly improved by the fact that they had to be submitted to a stern criticism and careful scrutiny by this House. If, instead of all the time complaining they had not reached the final goal, members exercised the virtues of faith, hope and love and assumed tacitly that they had more responsibility than was expressed in the letter of law, both they and the Government could work together and realise the definite goal.

Mr. T. C. GOSWAMI said that the Executive Council was the quintessence of the Government of India and hence this constitutional protest against the travelling expenses of the Executive Council. He asked why certain items of the Budget were made non-votable from votable. It was not only not honest but not lawful. The British Parliament had perpetrated a fraud on the constitution of India by making nonvotable the whole of the Lee Commission grant. India was robbed by the manipulation of currency and exchange. India did not want Swaraj with a mortgaged India. There was a conspiracy between the Government and the European vested interests to take as much out of India as was possible before she got even the framework of responsible Government. With all sense of responsibility, he declared that the remission of the provincial contributions was of utmost unconcern to him, because the whole of the remitted money was not applied to the transferred departments. In discussing the Finance Bill, therefore, the remission of the provincial contributions should not weigh with the members and yesterday, when he asked about Jibanal Catterjee, a political prisoner who was on his deathbed with tuberculosis, he was told that the case was under consideration.

Sir Alexander Muddiman : Sir, I said that the man was released from jail, but is in the custody of the District Magistrate.

Mr. Goswami : What is the difference between that he is in custody and he is not in jail ? Even barbarians and savages would treat human beings with greater considerations. When the question of bombs was being discussed, respect for human life was preached. I should like the official side to show respect for human beings and it is only then that they (bomb-users) will respect the lives of foreigners in this country.

Mr. N. C. KELKAR said though technically the mention aimed at reduction of establishment charges, virtually it was directed against the Executive Councillors whose salaries were non-votable. The Government of India had failed to defend Indian interests and take the Nationalist view whether in matters of financial concern or otherwise. There was no responsibility to the legislature and indeed responsibility was impossible to locate between provincial Governments and the Government of India and the Secretary of State. They knew it in practice in the case of passport difficulties for certain persons. He contended that want of education had not stood in the way of any country's advance. Multiplicity of language did not bar South Africa from getting self-government. India's protection by Britain was in imperial and not India's interests. As for the electors' responsibility, what did it mean ? Liability to take the consequences. If a wrong member was sent, electors would reap the benefit of it. He for one would strongly oppose the present system of Government. "Yesterday we were asked to vote for 1s. 6d. because it was a *de facto* ratio. To-day we are asked to vote for the Government because it is a *de facto* Government. (Laughter). I refused to do so yesterday and I will not do so to-day. No nationalist ought to be grateful at the sacrifice of her political liberties." (Applause).

Moulvi Mahomed YAKUB supported the motion with the reservation that the interests of minority communities must be safeguarded as outlined in the resolutions passed at the All-India Muslim League in 1926. He agreed with Col. Crawford that the electorate was not as educated and intelligent as it should be ; but, when Colonel Crawford quoted Mr. Belvi's views on our franchise, why did he not quote the views of Mr. Belvi about franchise in Canada ? (Hear, hear.) Educated Indian Mussalmans were second to none in their desire for self-government for India ; but at the same time, they wanted to make it clear that their demand was supplemented by an equally strong desire to protect their religious, social and economic interests, for he believed that being members of a minority community, they could not allow themselves to be drifted without knowing what their position

under the sun would be when Swaraj dawned. Proceeding, Mr. Yakub read the terms of guarantee given to non-Muslim nationals in Turkey.

Mr. Joshi asked if Mr. Yakub would be satisfied if those provisions were introduced in the Indian Constitution for Mussalmans. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Yakub : Yes, But how can I be sure, when a Hindu leader like Lala Lajpat Rai says, as he is reported to have said on another occasion, that Hindus should not give Mussalmans more seats in Councils and that the Lucknow Pact was a mistake ?

Lala Lajpat Rai asked Mr. Yakub to quote him correctly.

Moulvi Yakub : Sir, Lalaji is reported to have said :—"He could not understand those Hindu leaders who said that they must have Swaraj at any cost. What would they gain by Swaraj, if they lost their own identity. (Cries of hear, hear.) He did not want the Hindus to be destroyed."

Sir Abdul Qayum :—It means that if it is not a Hindu Raj, then they do not want Swaraj.

Lala Lajpat Rai :—I entirely repudiate that suggestion.

Moulvi Mahomed Yakub :—However, Sir, Mussalmans cannot be blamed if they being poor in number, in education and in wealth ask for protection of their lives and interests. Place us in the same position in which non-Mussalmans are in Turkey.

Lala Lajpat Rai :—Much more.

Proceeding, Moulvi Yakub read the resolutions passed at the Muslim League to show the fundamental conditions necessary for co-operation between Hindus and Mussalmans.

When he referred to communal relations, Mr. Kabiruddin Ahmed interjected :—"Oh, the question of music before mosque is a religious matter.

Moulvi Mahomed Yakub :—It is not a religious matter. What our religion says is that Mussalmans should not be purposely disturbed when they say their prayers. (Cries of hear, hear). If there is any intention to disturb the prayers, then it is criminal. (Applause from Congress and Nationalist Party benches. Voices : "Quite right") I challenge any Mussalman to show me anything to say that playing of music before mosque is itself irreligious.

Mr. Kabiruddin : What about the Koran ?

Mr. Yakub : It is an insult to quote the Koran which Mr. Kabiruddin has never read. However, Sir, if you give these conditions as stated in the resolutions of the Muslim League, then we shall progress together. Otherwise, you shall have to wait.

Raja Ghaznafar Ali Khan : Do you want the Royal Commission now ?

Mr. Yakub : Whether we want or not, it is coming in 1929. As practical men let something be done. Let us unite. Of course, we appointed a committee in the Lahore Session of the League which sent an invitation to the Congress Committee for a conference to discuss the communal situation and settle the lines for reforms. We received a very disappointing reply ; but now that the Commission is coming when the iron is hot we should sit together and formulate our united demands. On behalf of my community, I again extend the invitation to the Congress and Nationalist parties.

LALA LAJPAT RAI congratulated Maulvi Mahomed Yakub, Deputy President, on his speech. Muslims were perfectly right in doing all they could to safeguard their interests ; but a similar right should not be denied to Hindus. He wanted neither Hindu raj nor Muslim raj but an Indian raj. In fact no communal raj was possible to-day and they must develop in a manner as would secure them a lasting Indian raj. It was with this feeling that he had decried the Lucknow Pact at the Bihar Hindu Conference. He admitted that the authors of the Lucknow Pact drew it up in absolute good faith ; but it was a short-sighted policy and was responsible for the existing poison in their relations. (Hear, hear). He assured Mr. Yakub that every right conceded by the Turks to their non-Muslim nationals would be conceded to Muslims in India and even more. (Applause) But while the Muslim minorities should have adequate protection against the Hindu majority, the Hindus and Sikhs should have similar protection in the Punjab and elsewhere.

Mr. Yakub :—You will have it.

Lala Lajpat Rai said it was a matter of right and justice. The real question was of terms and safeguards. These must be settled ; but they must not be such as would in the name of protection of interests entirely debar evolution to self-government. He welcomed particularly Maulvi Yakub's pronouncement on the

question of music before mosques and declared that any one who played music before mosque with the intention of disturbing prayers was not only a lunatic, but a criminal, and wherever music had been played from time immemorial and Muslims disturbed a procession that too was criminal (applause, in which all sections of the House joined). Let the Government and non-officials evolve a scheme to eliminate this. The Muslim League's resolution was not the final word. It was the basis for discussion and they were already having conversations on the subject. There were in the League's resolution suggestions which were impractical; but the underlying sentiment in respect of which he accepted them was the questions affecting any community from the purview of the legislature as some safeguard against religious matters of one community being disturbed by the votes of the other.

Coming to the political part of the debate, he commented on Sir Basil's appeal for virtues of hope, charity, and love; but he wished the Government practised these virtues. He had faith in God who, when the cup of injustice was full, would do justice to India. He did not expect charity from the British to Indians, when even among their own people in Europe there was international injustice. He did not question the motive of members of the Government; but they were part of a soulless machine and were to protect the interests of their own country. Indians might be clever politicians but were children in diplomacy. The Government played with words and what non-officials considered as promise turned out to be nothing of the sort. This House was a mockery of Parliament and the curious manipulation of votes that went on was fully apparent yesterday when only 28 non-officials voted for 1s. 6d. against 65 and yet the world was told that the Assembly had accepted 1s. 6d. (Hear, hear.) This new constitution had indeed made their position worse. Formerly, responsibility was entirely that of the Government. Now the votes were manipulated and that responsibility was sifted on to the Assembly. He wanted that the Government gave them absolute power in new things and then see the result; but if there was no such gesture, he would say seriously and not bluff that not only our misguided youths but even elderly men and those having a stake in the country might be driven to despair. He was supporting the motion not to urge a Royal Commission. That demand had been previously put forward. He supported this annual protest against the system of Government which he considered as irresponsible, arbitrary and autocratic which had in no sense improved the relations between the rulers and the ruled. (Applause.) He offered to come to a settlement both on the Hindu-Muslim question and between the rulers and the ruled if the other sides responded. The Government members must have charity and love, but quite the reverse of it was exhibited when the Government members defended payment of Rs. 9 a month salary to railway menials. He was most surprised to find Rev. Macphail, a Minister of Christian religion, defending this wages. It was a calumny to the religion of Christ that this Minister should have defended a wages of Rs. 9 on the basis of supply and demand. (Applause.)

Mr. RATNASWAMI, representing the Indian Christian community, expressed himself in sympathy with the object of the motion, but not with the form in which it was moved. He doubted whether this House was the proper forum for putting forward the national demand. It was neither a convention nor a constituent assembly, but was a subordinate parliament. He also doubted whether political and social conditions justified a more rapid political progress. National unity, national sanction not only in the form of physical force, national civil service which would execute the behests of the legislature were conditions precedent to the grant of a large measure of self-government. Premature constitutionalism which was enforced in some countries in Europe before the condition precedent of national unity was forthcoming and even the history of premature constitutionalism in England towards the end of the Middle Ages showed how such attempts came to grief. In speaking of national sanction he did not refer merely to physical force but to public opinion and who would deny that to-day's public opinion in India was urban and that the villager did not back it? (A voice:—Question.) He admitted that Provincial Governments had been conceded a partial measure of Self-Government but no real autonomy was possible even in a province until the national civil service was under the Ministers' control. As regards the Central Government, he had watched its working for a short period and what struck him was the unreality in which they seemed to be working. (Hear, hear from non-official benches). Resolution after resolution was carried and the Government accepted defeats cheerfully. This was



demoralizing both to the legislature and the Executive. (Hear, hear). As an Australian Governor once remarked, "to grant responsible institutions and to deny responsible Government is like lighting fire and stopping the chimney". (Applause). Irresponsibility of the House was due to the fact that Pandit Motilal and Sir P. Thakurdas did not offer an alternative Government to Sir Alexander Muddiman and Sir Basil Blackett. If they did, many decisions arrived at by a majority of the House would now be realised. But while he believed that the present constitution had great defects, he did not want political progress to outrun social progress and wanted national unity to precede political advance. It was quite possible in an atmosphere of blue in which most modern Governments found themselves that the British Government might grant India a large measure of Swaraj provided agitation were universal; but till they got unity and a national citizen army the demand for a large measure of self-government must be considered as out of due time.

Turning now to the Government he could not congratulate it on a more satisfactory attitude. At one time it was popular to describe the Government as a trusteeship. Afterwards there was a cry for a change in the angle of vision and recently they had asked for a change of heart. History would uphold the Government for discharging the trust in the matter of development of property held. (A voice : Question). As for change of vision this was impossible and would only make the Government squint-eyed (laughter). As for change of heart the Government was a corporation having neither a body to be kicked nor a soul to be saved. (Laughter). The right attitude was to ask the British Government in India to change the whole philosophy of their attitude towards the people of this country. They must act as true teachers not to find out how little the pupil knew but try to draw the best out of the pupil, to behave like an elder brother who should do everything honestly to make his younger brother share those conditions which the elder brother had possessed.

Mr. Ratnaswami's next advice was that the British people in India should not follow British history where the aristocracy looked upon all popular movements as advances on their quarters and privileges so that rights were conceded only at the point of extreme popular and universal agitation. It was with this attitude that the British Government in India viewed all demands for greater extension of political rights and privileges. That was all very well in a country like England where the people were governed by men of their own race; but in India the British must anticipate progress and do everything for securing political progress. While the representatives of the people were busy with the building of the superstructure of a free and prosperous India, the British on the other hand must busy themselves with strengthening the foundations of that liberty and self government which he hoped would be secured to India in the near future. He deplored the Government had not done anything to nationalise the army. They should have done this almost immediately after the assumption of responsibility of the Government by the Crown. The sepoy mutiny was not a national insurrection. They must also nationalise the navy. He personally thought that the time had arrived when there must be a reform of the constitution, if only to remove the difficulties between the Central and provincial Governments. Some European papers had suggested that the Statutory Commission should sit in judgment over the political capacity of the people. That was exactly what the Commission should not be asked to do. The Commission was not to see how far the people were at present fit for a large measure of self-government, but to devise ways and means for fitting them and training them to attain full responsible Government as early as possible. As Robert Clive said : "To go back is impossible but to stand still is dangerous". He trusted that by the co-operation of a farseeing Government and representatives of the people who were wise to realise the limitations they could be united by a common purpose and advance towards that goal which they all had at heart.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN affirmed that it was not possible for any Government to give any people self-government. This must come from the people themselves (hear, hear). It was absolutely impossible for the British Government by a stroke of the pen to create a national Government and making it function. Mr. Jayakar's speech had been very able. It had been argued that before a statutory enquiry was ordered, His Majesty's Government should make a declaration in Parliament as to the exact course to be followed by that enquiry. What the Assembly apparently desired was that the policy should be formulated by His Majesty's Government and then the enquiry held to see how it could be carried out. That was not what the

Government of India Act contemplated or what other Governments had done. The suggestion was, indeed, without any precedent. If the suggestion was followed, then that would be placing the enquiry in very awkward position; for the policy had been laid down. Mr. Jayakar had quoted the views of a lady friend on dyarchy; but the opinion of that friend was not very destructive to dyarchy. He agreed that the changes made in the Act by Parliament did constitute restrictions on the power of the Assembly; but those restrictions were in the opinion of Parliament very necessary.

Sir H. S. Gour interjected :—Did you protest against Parliament's action ?

Sir Alexander Muddiman :—I recommended that one of the great dangers in which I find this House involved is that exercise of authority brings its own reward. Of course, there may be people who would say that my excess authority will bring its own reward. Some members had said that the foreigners must be fought. As a policy, it may be necessary, but I ask is it wise ? If you have got to live the frog, then you must make friends with the crocodile (Laughter). It was undoubtedly the duty of the legislature to persuade the Government to act in the way it likes, but this could not be achieved by fighting the Government. Hares are snared by many ways, either by kindness or by other ways. Some times you snare it by treating it kindly (A voice :—Never).

Dr. Gour :—The hare is still wily (Laughter).

Proceeding, the Home Member said no constitution could be run where the legislature was in conflict with the Executive; yet the Government had to be carried on and so there were the residuary powers. The more the Assembly forced on the Government, constituted as it was to exercise the residuary power conferred on that Government, the more the Assembly weakened itself and the Government. He was glad to find that Moulvi Mohamed Yakub had explained the position of Mussalmans and Lala Lajpat Rai had reciprocated it in a speech which contained much that was reliable. The communal question must be solved by the people themselves (A voice : If you will allow.)

Sir Alexander Muddiman :—If the suggestion is that we are not doing everything we can possibly to deal with the question, then I do believe there is no one in the House who is prepared to repeat it. Concluding, the Home Member said :—"All are agreed that some change in the constitution is desirable; but the question is when and how it could be made. I do not think I can elaborate it on the grant under consideration. The general charge against the Executive Government apart from the question of reforms is :—"We have left undone many things which we should have done." This is a phrase which many a man repeats every Sunday. (Laughter). As long as the opposition continues as it does in this House, the Government of India will not be able to meet it corporately; for opposition will continue to repeat it. (Here the Home Member was imperfectly heard). I wish this constitutional issue had been raised on a specific resolution. One motion was recently tabled; but it did not attain fruition for reasons which I cannot understand (Laughter); the motion now is for touring expenses for Executive Councillors. I crave the mercy of the House that these be granted. (Laughter and applause).

#### MOTION CARRIED BY A MAJORITY.

The motion was carried by 65 to 56 votes amidst loud non-official applause. The Assembly then adjourned.

#### CUSTOMS DEMAND.

On the 10th MARCH the House took up the demands for grants on their merits. The House first voted Re. 1 for the Executive Council members' touring expenses without further discussion.

Sir Basil Blackett then moved the demand under Customs.

Mr. Sesha Iyengar moved a token cut under Customs demand to protest against the Government for having "a more or less unconscious bias in favour of British interests as against Indian interests." He instanced the reduction of import duty on cotton piecegoods and reduction of export duty on tea and hides which he said were helping the British interests. The motion was withdrawn.

#### REVISION OF CUSTOMS TARIFF

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar moved a token cut to censure the Government for not undertaking a scientific revision of customs tariffs and for the manner in which the revision had taken place. He instanced the case of sugar duty which has been made

specific on the pretext of safeguarding their revenues from falling off, both of which had really doubled the revenue at the cost of the consumer. There was then laxity on the part of the administration. The Auditor-General had condemned in no uncertain terms the various frauds which had gone on in the Calcutta Customs office for generations. The Public Accounts Committee too had commented on the subject. Then again the difficulty seemed to be caused by the subject being under two members, namely, the Commerce Member and the Finance Member. There was an extremely unsatisfactory position in regard to land customs. The motion was rejected.

#### ASSESSMENT OF DUTY ON IMPORTED PAPER

Colonel J. D. Crawford moved a cut to protest against a recent ruling as to assessment of duty on imported paper. In 1925, the House gave, he said, a definite protection to paper industry, particularly bamboo pulp. A new customs ruling which was issued on the subject was 'ultra vires' and was issued without any notice being given to traders concerned. Therefore, bona fide traders had been put to a great loss. The motion was withdrawn.

#### SCALE OF CLERKS' PAY IN THE PROVINCES

Mr. Duraiswami Iyengar moved the next cut to protest against the invidious distinction between provinces on the scale and pay of clerks in Madras Presidency. He asked why was not distinction made on the scale of salaries of superior services? The motion was lost.

#### EXPORT DUTY ON JUTE

Mr. K. C. Neogy moved another cut under the same head to protest against the export duty on jute, which he said was a great handicap on the jute producer. The producer had not been able during the last year even to recover the cost of production. Purchase of jute was in the hands of a strong ring which cleverly manipulated the prices in such a way that the major part of this taxation fell on the cultivator. He, therefore, recommended that an immediate enquiry should be instituted to find out if this taxation could be reduced or the lot of the producer be improved. The motion was lost.

#### ABOLITION OF EXPORT DUTY ON RICE

Mr. U. Tok Kyi by a cut of Rs. 100 pleaded for the abolition of export duty on rice. He said that the duty was injurious to India in general and to Burma in particular. Burma alone contributed ninety per cent of the total export from India. On account of this duty, the prices of rice had risen about six times during the last few years in all provinces.

Sir Basil Blackett pointed out that so long as Indo-China and Siam also levied an export duty on rice and would not reduce or abolish it, there was no use discussing the question. The duty in all the three cases was falling mainly on the consumer, because in the case of rice, there was practically a monopoly for India as well as Siam and Indo-China, and there was a steady demand for it. So long as the Government had other duties which had prior claim for reduction or abolition, so long the Government of India could not hold out any promise of abolition of export duty on rice.

#### SMUGGLING ON LAND BORDERS

Mr. K. C. Roy by a cut of Rs. 100 raised the question of smuggling on land borders, especially in Kathiawar where according to the Taxation Enquiry Committee there was smuggling of silk and matches. He feared this was due to a silly convention which the Government of India entered into with the Indian States. The Committee had recommended enquiry in this subject of convention. Mr. Roy wanted to know what the Government had done.

Sir P. Thakurdas said his information was that close upon a crore of rupees had been lost to British India's revenue by this smuggling. There should, therefore, be no delay.

Sir Basil Blackett agreed that Sir Purshothamdas's figure of one crore was not wide of the mark. He promised to secure some decision as soon as it was possible. The cut was lost.

When the House resumed after lunch, Mr. M. K. Acharya opposed the entire demand under the head "Customs" and put forward the theory of redress of grievances before supply. When Mr. Acharya resumed his seat the demand was agreed to by 42 against 32, the Nationalists remaining neutral.

#### POST AND TELEGRAPH DEMAND

Sir B. N. Mitra moved the demand for grant under the head "Indian Postal and Telegraph Department" including the working expenses.

Mr. T. Prakasam by a cut of Rs. 1,500 raised the policy of paying low salaries to postal clerks, peons and subordinate services. He said an invidious distinction has been drawn between the salaries given to postmen in Madras and other cities. The salaries of peons and postmen who bore the brunt of work were very little compared to those over them.

Sir B. N. MITRA was cheered as he rose to reply to the debate in which 21 members had taken part. He spoke for three-quarters of an hour explaining various actions taken by him. He acknowledged that generally members had displayed a friendly spirit, but some had struck a jarring note. He did not expect the House would support the communalistic views of Mr. Chamanlal. Mr. Farooki was not fair to him and the member from Bihar and others who spoke in the same vein should remember the dictum enunciated by Sir Abdul Qayum that they could not in the Postal Department make payments higher than those received by the employees of Central and Local Governments. As one who had worked as a clerk (applause) he fully realised the position of postal clerks. He was glad at the tribute paid to Mr. Rogers, Postmaster-General Bombay and to hear Mr. Kelkar acknowledge the relations subsisting between the postal officers and employees in Bombay. As for Lala Lajpat Rai's complaint regarding the Punjab, Sir Bhupendra declared that the general scheme for future recruitment of postal clerks was being worked out which would provide for due representation of various communities in accordance with the general principles laid down by the Government of India and that would remove any abuse if it existed in any circle. He emphasised, however, that so far as complaints against the existence of a large number of Anglo-Indians in the telegraph service were concerned he would not be party to depriving any person of his livelihood. The claims of other communities were to be met not by getting rid of men already in employ, but by regulating future recruitment. Hitherto, the difficulty had been surplus departmental telegraphists. They hoped to consume these during 1927-28. As for the wireless branch, there were in the superior service 7 Europeans and 2 Indians. This was a fair proportion to start with. As regards wireless operators there were 78 Europeans and 54 Indians including Anglo-Indians.

Sir Bhupendra explained that the surplus telegraphists were drafted into the wireless branch. Steps were being taken to introduce a scheme of recruitment which would provide facilities for recruitment of Indians. He promised Mr. Haji to look into the question of training for marine wireless. The speaker did not accept Mr. Joshi's statement that it was the poor man who paid for the post office. On the other hand, whatever profit was made came wholly from business men who were equally interested in telegraphs and telephones. Comparing the figures of the budget for the year with the position three years ago, Sir Bhupendra showed that postal expenditure had increased by Rs. 68 lakhs as a result of extension of service and amelioration of the conditions of employees while telegraph expenses had gone up by Rs. 1 lakh only.

Coming to the question of grievances, the member recalled that it was in February 1925 that the House at the instance of Mr. Jinnah committed to the charge of the speaker the case of postal employees and he had examined it personally in all its varied aspects and had done all he could within his resources to meet legitimate grievances. (Applause.) This was entirely due to Sir Basil's important declaration that he did not treat the Post and Telegraph Departments as profit-earning which thus enabled the speaker every year to arrange his plans to use his surplus in beneficial ways. At present his programme was extension of postal facilities and amelioration of the conditions of the low paid staff. As regards the former, it would benefit the poor man by extension of facilities in rural areas and he mentioned that while in nine years ending 1924-25 only 780 additional post offices were opened, there were being opened in the current and the previous year 1,400 new post offices. (Applause.) He trusted the House would not upset the

financial arrangement ; for otherwise, he would be knocking as a beggar every year at the Finance Member's door for some subsidy for his programme. (Laughter). He assured the House that all suggestions made by the members would receive his most careful and sympathetic consideration, particularly, in regard to further improvement in the pay of postal clerks in Madras City. (Applause).

#### CENSORING TELEGRAMS

Mr. K. C. Roy moved a cut of one rupee to draw attention to the manner in which telegrams were censored. He read the section of the Telegraph Act which contemplated suppression or detention of telegrams in case of emergency or in the interest of public safety but statutory rules under the Act laid down that such power be exercised in the case of any message "of objectionable or alarming nature." Mr. Roy claimed that this rule was inconsistent with the Telegraph Act and he required Sir B. N. Mitra to get legal opinion of the Law Officer of the Crown.

Coming to the question of the administration of law, he said the House had this matter recently brought to its notice by censoring of telegrams regarding the Kharagpur strike. The speaker said under statutory rules every telegraphist whether in a town or in a village was a potential censor. He had large experience of the manner this censor worked and gave to the House a recent instance of how a communique issued by a department of the Government of India was held up as objectionable by the Telegraph Office, Madras (Laughter) and on reference, the objection of the local telegraph office was upheld by the local authority. He made representation to the Home Department and got the matter set right, but it was three days after he had booked the message that he got first information of its censure. He would, therefore, urge the Industries Member to review the present position and issue a sensible circular. Newspaper men had a grievance against application of the statutory rule. (Applause.)

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar said, he had numerous instances to quote in supporting Mr. Roy's motion. It was a scandal that newspapers were at the mercy of the telegraphists and were deprived of much valuable news. Once Mrs. Besant telegraphed that she wanted bread and marinate, but the telegraphist thought this word marinate was a kind of dynamite and deleted it, (laughter) and Mrs. Besant had to content herself for a fortnight with bread alone.

Mr. K. C. Neogy asked whether the Government had any statutory authority to issue rules. The character of emergency contemplated by the section was of far graver character than a casual strike like the one at Kharagpur. Rules must not be inconsistent with the Act.

Mr. Arthur Moore strongly supported Mr. Roy. No responsible man would object to censorship in regard to certain matter; but, it must have a co-ordinated system and proper authority. It is ludicrous that a communication issued by one of the most serious-minded departments of the Government of India, like the F. and P. Departments, should be held up by the telegraphist in Madras as unfit for publication. They had an instance in connection with the despatch of troops in China. This information was known to journalists in this country for a number of days. The telegram booked in Delhi were held up for several days and the reason was not any military necessity, but a trivial excuse that they did not wish the statement of the Viceroy on the subject to the Assembly to be anticipated. (Laughter.) But it was anticipated in Bombay, Lahore and elsewhere. This was a serious matter and Mr. Roy had done a service in calling attention to it. (Applause.)

Sir B. N. Mitra said that he was not aware of the facts concerning censorship of the telegram in question. Referring to Mr. Neogy's complaint, he observed that the statutory rules were published in *The Gazette of India*. Mr. Roy had brought to notice certain facts connected with administration of rules by the subordinates of the Telegraph Department. He would certainly have the matter looked into.

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar: What about the revision of the rules?

Sir B. N. Mitra: These rules were examined carefully by the Legislative Department before they were issued and they had satisfied themselves that the rules were in consonance with the Act. If Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar wanted further examination he had no objection.

The cut was, however, pressed to division and carried, 44 voting for and 39 against it. Several Swarajists abstained from voting.

## SENDING TELEGRAMS BY POST

Mr. Roy by another token cut objected to the posting of telegrams by the department when there was a congestion or breakdown in traffic. The obnoxious rule was in the departmental manual authorising the telegraph master to post the telegrams. For example during the Christmas week, there was complete breakdown of service from Calcutta to Northern India and telegrams were in several cases posted. He objected to this on principle that the telegrams meant for transmission should not be posted, but should be wired and if not sent back to the sender or at least the money refunded. Sir Ganes Roy said the breakdown in service during Christmas was due to congestion at Gauhati where the Congress was held. The department did the work well and so the censure was undeserved. The motion was carried by 47 against 43, a few Swarajists remaining neutral.

## POST AND TELEGRAPH DEMAND PASSED

The demand under Post and Telegraphs was then put, reduced by Rs. 2 and was passed by the House, Congressmen dissenting but not challenging a division. The House then adjourned.

## The Currency Bill.

On the 12th MARCH when the House resumed discussion on the Currency Bill the President declared that though the Assembly rejected 1s. 4d. ratio on the 7th March, it had not yet accepted 1s. 6d. Clause 4 dealing with the ratio would be first disposed of finally.

By 62 against 57 the Legislative Assembly carried Mr. Sesha Iyengar's amendment imposing the obligation on the Currency authority to buy fine gold if tendered to a minimum quantity of 40 tolas.

Sir Basil Blackett was agreeable to reduce the proposed minimum in the Bill of 1,065 tolas to 300 in the interest of the bullion market.

Mr. Sesha Iyengar raised the question of a minimum of 1,065 tolas proposed in the bill for the quantity of fine gold which if tendered at the Currency Office must be purchased by the authorities. He wanted this minimum to be reduced to 40 tolas.

Mr. Pandya wanted it to be further reduced to ten tolas, while Mr. Kelkar's amendment was to bring it down to 300 tolas.

Sir Basil Blackett said the purpose was merely one of convenience and to see that the bullion market's business was not prejudiced, but he would accept Mr. Kelkar's amendment. In practice, Sir Basil added that the currency authority would gladly purchase gold in whatever little quantity it was tendered.

Mr. Shanmukham Chetti contended that there was no limit whatever to the quantity of gold that was tendered at the Currency Office in England. The minimum limit of 400 ounces applied only to the sale of gold by the Bank of England.

Mr. Kelkar said if he were the Government, he would gladly purchase even the least quantity of gold that was offered at the Currency Office. This would help him to build up the reserve.

Sir Basil Blackett : I agree.

Continuing, Mr. Kelkar said that he had suggested 300 tolas with a view not to prejudice the interests of private dealers of gold.

Mr. Prakasam preferred 40 tolas as minimum.

The House divided on Mr. Sesha Iyengar's motion for 40 tolas which was carried by 62 to 57.

## QUALITY AND FINENESS OF GOLD

Mr. Jamnadas Melita wanted to ensure the assay quantity and fineness of gold.

Sir Basil Blackett replied that there was absolute unanimity on this point. The Government wished to buy gold in as large a quantity as possible. If he preferred 300 tolas to 40 it was because he did not wish to interfere with retail trade in gold. But the currency authority would receive gold without the least possible restriction and conditions about the assay quantity and fineness of gold as given in the

notification were more comprehensive than those proposed in the amendment of Mr. Jammadas.

The amendment was thereupon withdrawn.

#### VOTING ON RATIO CLAUSE

The President then put to the House Clause (4) as amended.

Mr. Shanmukham CHETTI led the opposition to the Clause urging the House not to accept 1s. 6d. Mr. Chetti opposed the clause because 1s. 4d. ratio had been defeated by 28 elected representatives although 65 elected representatives had voted for it. He feared these 28 elected members had sold their souls to the Government. When posterity would go through the proceedings of the debate, they would find that the Finance Member had not replied to the non-officials' criticisms because he believed that arguments were of no use when the psychological moment had come only for counting of heads. India could not subscribe to the view that the rupee had no natural value and that there was no sanctity attached to any particular ratio. He twitted his Professor (Dr. Macphail) as to the argument of the quantity theory of money and said his teachings of economics had made him (speaker) learn quite the opposite of what he himself had taught. (Laughter).

Proceeding, Mr. Chetti quoted the falling tendency in gold prices and contended that it would be very difficult indeed to maintain 1s. 6d. ratio.

Mr. Fazal RAHIMTULLAH said he did not doubt the honesty of those nominated members who voted with the Government on the ratio question. But when elected members of the Assembly all thought one way why should the nominated members who, according to Sir Abdul Quayum, were ignorant and did not understand the subject well go and vote for 1s. 6d.? They should have remained neutral and let the decision be arrived at by the elected representatives of the people in this Assembly. He went further and said that the Government should in this matter have abstained from voting, for it was too serious to be interfered with by the Government or nominated parties. Even now, if the choice was left to purely elected bloc in the House including the European bloc and if there was freedom of vote to every elected member, the question would be decided in the interests of the country. But personality played a most prominent part and the result was that his Muslim friends had played into the hands of the Government who wanted to maintain their prestige and nothing else. The currency and ratio of the country was not a religious question. Why should the Mahomedan members have made it a communal question?

Proceeding Mr. Fazal contended that nothing was more likely to endanger the good relations between India and Great Britain than that India's fiscal policy should be dictated from Whitehall in the interests of the trade of Great Britain. He feared that the Government of India was a misnomer. It was the Government of England in India. (Applause).

Mr. PRAKASAM, opposing the clause, declared that if it was carried it would make it impossible for them in future to have a gold standard and gold currency. The minority report of the Fowler Committee consisted of disinterested Englishmen who had told the real truth about India's interests. Sir Basil Blackett had lost 30 crores of Indian money in maintaining 1s. 6d. India has been made a victim of the caprice of the bureaucracy.

Mr. Tarit Bhushan ROY deprecated all attempts which would only bring about an era of uncertainty. In spite of his best endeavours, he could not agree with 1s. 4d. ratio. Reducing the gold value of the rupee would injure the interests of the suffering millions. (Cries of question.) Himself a businessman, he felt, he must subordinate his own interests to higher interests of the poor. (Cheers and counter-cheers). He quoted Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar's views in support of the contention that 1s. 6d. ratio would benefit agriculturists. He made it clear that in exercising his vote in the matter he would do so according to the dictates of his own conscience undaunted by frowns and unseduced by the smiles of officials.

Pundit Motilal NEHRU rose to reconcile the two opposing views on the ratio question. He said he was supposed in certain quarters to be in favour of 1s. 4d. and in others to be in favour of 1s. 6d. But neither of the supposition was true. He had considered very carefully the Currency Report and also the speeches of members in favour of 1s. 4d. and 1s. 6d. and had come to one conclusion, namely,

that there had been no necessity made out for any legislation. On the one side, it was stated that since the prices had adjusted themselves to 1s. 6d. this was the natural ratio. On the other side, it was stated that the prices had not adjusted themselves and therefore 1s. 6d. was not the natural ratio. If the prices had adjusted what was the necessity of passing any legislation? If the prices had not adjusted why not the ratio be allowed to have its own course. He emphatically declared that he did not believe any ratio to be natural, scientific or even honest. He did not believe that anybody would give his vote on either side for consideration other than his own conviction.

Sir Basil Blackett : Why did you vote for 1s. 4d.

Pandit Motilal : Although I am not in favour of 1s. 4d., I am not against it. (Laughter). The reason is to my mind that considerations in favour of 1s. 4d. far outweigh those for 1s. 6d. When he first said that the Congress Party members would be allowed to vote on the side they liked, it was due to the fact that the party had not thought over the question. But even if they had not made it a party question, the result of voting on their side would have been the same. He, therefore, urged that legislation on this issue be dropped. Referring to canvassing which has been going on, he read to the House a telegram purporting to have been sent by a relative of his to Mr. Rafi Ahmed, Assistant Whip of the Congress Party, asking the latter to see his father who was seriously ill. But when Mr. Rafi Ahmed telegraphed back, he received a reply that his father was not ill and that the original telegram was not sent to him by any of his relatives.

Pandit Malaviya emphasised that this was the first time that a statutory obligation was being imposed on the Government to maintain a particular ratio. The matter was of such vital importance that the Government should have tried to secure unanimity of feeling in the House rather than legislate on the strength of a snatched vote of three. Pandit Motilal had shown how canvassing had been done. Why should not the Government allow freedom of vote to its members and nominated non-officials?

Sir Basil BLACKETT, replying, repudiated any connection of the Government with the telegram referred to by the Pandit. The House would unanimously condemn such action. (Hear, hear). Pandit Motilal had stated that the House must decide whether the time had come for stabilising the exchange. This decision, the speaker maintained, the House had already taken by taking the bill into consideration, thereby accepting its principle, namely, that the time had come to stabilise the exchange. The House had on Tuesday last declared that it did not wish to stabilise the exchange at 1s. 4d. and the only alternative left was 1s. 6d. If, however, the House were to reject 1s. 6d. the result would technically be that the Government would be asked to work up to the ratio of two shillings now on the statute book. (Voices : No, no).

Sir Basil : I don't say that it is practical. But this will be the technical result of the vote. I quite understand the wishes of those who lost on Tuesday to turn down the clause, but if this House is not to make itself ridiculous it must accept this clause and pass it. The occasion for stating that the time was not ripe for stabilising was on the consideration of the bill to which the House agreed unanimously. Pandit Motilal had stated that they should go on with executive action which meant that the Pandit held the Government to be justified in going on in maintaining stability at 1s. 6d. by the same method as they had been doing hitherto.

Pandit Motilal : My point is that responsibility will rest with the Government and not with this House.

Sir Basil : That is exactly my complaint ; that when this House is given responsibility it refuses to exercise it. (Laughter and applause). Opportunity has been given to this House to decide the very important issue and it has decided against 1s. 4d. and it will be nonsense for this House to pretend that it can now throw up its responsibility, by pointing out 'Oh, let the Government take the responsibility.' The House has come to a decision and I submit it is absolutely contrary to the interests of this House that it should now pretend that it is not responsible. It is also time that we take into consideration the interest of India. (Tropical hear, hear from non-official benches). The uncertainty hanging over the head of the market was removed by Tuesday's vote. It is entirely contrary to the interests of India and of stability that we should now, having reached this stage, suddenly plunge the whole country back into instability, which will be involved by any action taken by the House against the passage of this bill. The suggestion that



we should turn round and maintain 1s. 6d. by executive action is one which absolutely ignores the very important interest in this matter, namely, the interests of the millions of this country who are interested in the stability of exchange. I do hope the House will recognise its responsibility and come to the decision that the time has come to stabilise the exchange at 1s. 6d."

#### CLAUSE FOUR PASSED

The House then divided, 67 for and 62 against Clause 4 which fixed the ratio at 1s. 6d. The result was greeted with thundering cheers by the supporters of the 18 pence ratio.

#### AMENDMENTS TO CLAUSE II

When the President placed Clause II before the House for discussion, public galleries were largely depleted. The President said that he would allow Messrs. N. C. Kelkar and Vidyasagar Pandya to move their respective amendments in respect of the establishment of a Gold Mohur in India and making it obligatory on currency authority in India to give gold coin in exchange for gold.

Sir Basil Blackett said that the amendments could be more usefully moved when the other Bill came up for consideration.

Mr. N. C. KELKAR, retorting, said that he was aware of the matter and proceeded to move his amendment. He justified it on the ground that India was by no means unfamiliar with Gold Mohurs in the past and quoted ancient history and foreign records where India had been referred to as a land of gold. Why should not India like England have a Royal Mint of her own? It was said that the British Mint would not agree to the establishment of a branch Mint in this country. He would, therefore, suggest that Gold Mohur circulation should thereby be disallowed. He had read in a Bombay paper that as many as 36 lakhs of gold coins had been minted in the Bombay Mint long ago. Now even the rupee was being unminted. The Bombay Mint even to-day was fully equipped and if only Government had the will, the Mint could be restarted.

Continuing, Mr. Kelkar said that his amendment was not out of order, as it only demanded a gold coin in exchange for actual gold. Unless the Government were determined to demonetise Gold Mohur, no serious objection could be raised to his proposal. Proceeding, Mr. Kelkar emphasised that people had lost faith in the present currency policy. It was neither fool-proof nor wisdom-proof. He pointed out that while the Commission wanted gold to be sold in India, Sir Basil prevented India from getting gold.

Sir Darcy Lindsay, intervening, suggested to Mr. Kelkar that although the time allowed was generally one hour, yet he could impose some limit upon his own speech.

Mr. Kelkar : I propose to exercise my full powers. If there is any member who does not like to hear my speech he had better go out !

Sir Darcy Lindsay, thereupon, left the Chamber.

Continuing, Mr. Kelkar pointed out that Sir Malcolm Hailey had given an explicit assurance that as soon as India wanted a mint and gold currency, she should have them, but Sir Basil had deliberately departed from the Currency Commission's recommendations. His evidence was not as good as his scheme. His Bill was not as good as his evidence and he himself was not as good as his Bill. The Assembly then adjourned.

#### DEMAND FOR SALT.

On the 14th MARCH the Assembly resumed consideration of the demands for grants. About an hour and a half was spent in discussing the demand for Salt and all the three token cuts moved were negatived. The demand for salt was then passed.

#### ARMY DEPARTMENT DEMAND

The Assembly next discussed the demand for the Army Department.

Pundit Hridaynath Kunzru by a cut of Rs. 10,000 complained that the recommendations of the Auxiliary and Territorial Forces Committee were not given effect to; not even those which in the opinion of the Committee could be carried out without delay. The report was published in February 1925 and even now the cavalry and artillery sections had not been formed. There was racial difference

shown between this Auxiliary Force and the University Training Corps in the matter of ammunition, etc. He asked why every member of the University Corps should not be given a rifle.

Mr. Kabiruddin Ahmed : Because it may be used in communal riots.

Pundit Kunzru : These rifles will be kept in armouries and will not be easily available to the members of the corps.

Dr. Moonji quoted the recommendations of the Committee showing that there was distrust of Indians behind them. This was responsible for less expenditure on the Territorial Force and more on the Auxiliary Force.

Mr. Macworth Young replied that the Government of India's views on the report went to the Secretary of State on the 24th June last and the decision of the Secretary of State had not reached the Government. (Cries : You will never get it). Arrangements could be made for the supply of services rifles if Universities could make adequate arrangements for safe custody. The House need not be unnecessarily impatient over the delay in giving effect to the important recommendations of the Committee. He assured that there was no question of distrust of Indians.

The motion was carried by 63 against 44. The Assembly adjourned for lunch.

#### GOVERNMENT'S MILITARY POLICY

When the Assembly met after lunch Pandit Hridaynath KUNZRU raised an important debate on the general policy of the Military expenditure and the slow process of Indianisation. He affirmed that the Indian Army was being maintained at a huge size for Imperial service in other parts of the globe. In support of this contention, the Pandit quoted from the introduction by Lord Cousin to the book written on "Indian Corps in France" by Lord Birkenhead and Colonel Mearsweather. In this book published under the authority of the Secretary of State in Council, Lord Cousins had said : "I have seen it frequently stated that the Indian Army is raised, trained and equipped for service in India alone or upon its frontiers and that the call to external warfare was, therefore, both novel and disconcerting. Such a claim would not only be indignantly repudiated by the Indian Army itself but it finds no foundation in history. The Indian Army has always possessed and has been proud of possessing the triple functions of the preservation of internal peace in India itself, the defence of Indian frontiers and preparedness to embark at a moment's notice for Imperial services in other parts of the globe. In this third aspect, India has for long been one of the most important units in the scheme of British Imperial defence providing the British Government with a striking force always ready, of admirable efficiency and assured valour." (Hear, hear). So none could deny that the Indian Army was meant for external purpose. Proceeding, the Pandit complained that the recommendations passed by the Assembly with the concurrence of the Government on the Esher Committee's report had not been given effect to. He asked whether the Assembly's object in laying down conditions which should govern the size of the Indian Army had been fully accepted by His Majesty's Government.

As regards Reserves, the Assembly's object was that India should have short service system followed by service by Reserves. The Incheape Committee had pointed out that peace establishment battalion should be gradually placed on cadre basis which must be ultimately twenty per cent below war establishment. Mr. Burdon assured the Assembly in July 1923 that the system of Reserves had been accepted by His Majesty's Government and was being given effect to. Why then was it not given effect to ? Perhaps, the system had been in force for a short period in England itself. He wanted to know from the Commander-in-Chief (who was present in the Assembly) replies on all these points.

Proceeding, Pandit Kunzru referred to Mr. Burdon's reply on a previous occasion that no stone would be left unturned in arriving at a satisfactory settlement on the question of capitation charges. He asked whether a satisfactory settlement has been arrived at all. Two committees under the chairmanship of the Commander-in-Chief had enquired into the Indianisation of the Army, but their reports never saw the light of day. But the British press had announced that these reports favoured substantial increase in the appointment of Indians to commissioned ranks. Indians were not getting admission in Artillery, Air Force, Engineering Corps and in Tank Corps. The Eight Unit Scheme was one for the segregation of Indians. As Mr. Montagu said on the passing of the Government of India Bill in Parliament "do not deny self-government to India because she is unable to defend herself and

then deny her opportunities of being able to defend herself." This has been the policy of the British Government. Pandit Kunzru said : "The defence of India by Indians is more important than the question of constitutional reform." (Cheers).

Mr. JINNAH, who, too, had given notice of a cut to raise the question of military policy and programme, voiced the non-official case at some length. Speaking for about 40 minutes he contended that the Commander-in-Chief's statement that not a single man and not a single rupee could be taken off the present military strength and estimates was the most barren and disappointing. Where was the policy and programme which the Government had drawn up to meet the wishes of the House expressed year after year? Mr. Jinnah had no doubt that India could never be saved the present horrible burden of military defence until the organisation was changed and the army was nationalised. "The organisation of your army is still of the East India Company. It is to continue as the British garrison, as the Imperial Force. When is this to be changed? If your standing army is annihilated, what is your remedy?" Mr. Burdon, late Army Secretary, had admitted that the Territorial Force as the second line of defence was of vital importance; but what had the Government done? It appointed the Shea Committee but it was so incompetent that it could not come to a decision on it for 18 months though the Government was known to have taken action on the Royal Commission report within a few weeks. And now the Secretary of State was sitting on it. Let the Government recognise that not only there would be no economy without nationalizing the army but they must give up the old exploded system of depending on the standing army alone. The speaker's recent visit to America as a member of the Indian Sandhurst Committee had shown him that U. S. A. had realised its mistake and though it had a standing army of 125,000 men it could within two months put into field an army of a million. Unless therefore the fundamental policy of the army organisation was changed in India they would neither be able to defend India's hearth and home nor reduce the military burden on the people.

The Government had in the years 1920 and 1921 tried to concede materially to the Assembly's demands; but what had happened after a good deal of controversy? The Government appointed the Skeen Committee in August 1925 and the Committee reported in November, 1926. Its report went to the Secretary of State in January 1927. It was hoped that this Indian Sandhurst Committee would give them a Sandhurst. He was muzzled and could not say anything about its conclusions; but the Government of India though it appointed this Committee had told them that it was thoroughly impotent and could not publish the report of even its own Committee without the consent of the Secretary of State. Lord Winterton on the other hand, had told in the House of Commons that the blame lay on the Government of India (Laughter) who had not sent their views on it. He asked what harm was there in publishing the report. In fact if the report were published, the Commander-in-Chief would be helped in respect of British recruitment whose shortage he had regretted in replying to Colonel Crawford the other day. The report of the Committee, the speaker said, was practically unanimous and he paid his tribute to the ability, skill and sympathy of their Chairman, General Skeen. (Applause.) But the fact really was to the speaker's mind that the Government had no real desire to meet the universal public demand. They knew how Lord Birkenhead had declared that if responsible leaders co-operated with the British Government the latter would not be niggardly, how when this co-operation came the question of the settlement of communal differences was added as a pre-requisite? Sir Basil had last week told them of hope, faith, charity and love. "Is there any hope left? (Laughter, and No, No from non-official benches). Can you have faith (Voices : No, No). Is there any room for charity and for love (Voices : Ah and Laughter). The Home Member told us that if you live a frog you must make friends with the crocodile (Laughter). But that was not all. Friendship is one thing, but the Home Member said you must persuade the Government and treat them kindly. These are all cinema moving films. We get to nothing". Concluding, Mr. Jinnah said India was paying Sandhurst £80,000, Woolwich £30,000 and Chatham £15,000 and a huge sum for the British Royal Air Force in India in the last three years. Indians were not at all admitted: He wanted the Government therefore to publish the Skeen Report without delay and hoped the Commander-in-Chief would give them a ray of hope.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN was glad to hear from Mr. Jinnah the admission that the report of the Skeen Committee was a very valuable document and a distinctly

important step. It reached the hands of the Government of India in December and was despatched, of course after allowing for official delay, to the Secretary of State. Now they were in March. He therefore advised some more patience. Mr. Jinnah had quoted the United States of America which could within two months put into the field an army of one million. In two months if India was to be in a position to be able to put one million in the field that would involve expenditure more than what they now spent on the army. There was no country in the world which could do that in two months. Mr. Jinnah need not be so despondent of one thousand rupees.

Mr. JAYAKAR said if they wanted to develop a sense of power and responsibility they must be given fire arms; but the Government treated them with distrust and suspicion. At any rate he could assert this in the case of Bombay where hundreds of young men from schools and colleges after joining the Indian Defence Force and Training Corps almost resigned. They told him their complaints.

Mr. Macworth Young: Did you take any steps to convey their complaints to the Military authorities?

Mr. Jayakar: No, because I thought that the interference of a political agitator like myself would spoil the matter. I have no doubt Sir Chimanlal Setalvad as Vice-Chancellor of the University did report the complaint. I say that the policy in the training corps was the most deliberate process of killing the self-respect of young men. The whole policy was so cleverly devised with small pinpricks here and there calculated to injure the self-respect and enthusiasm of young men. I say you are really humbugs. Are you prepared to state in how many years you propose to make the army absolutely Indian? I am not concerned with the number of years; but with the automatic process by which Indianisation would be complete one day; but the speech of the Commander-in-Chief the other day showed that he was not prepared to cut down a single Britisher or a single rupee. The impression left on me on the aerial display was that I was being ostracised by reason of my colour and nationality. Abandon your policy of camouflage. Let us mark the sense of our extreme condemnation by carrying this out.

Mr. C. S. Ranga AIYAR spoke bitterly and asked how India could advance towards self-government if Indianisation of the Army was not to proceed hand in hand with Indianisation in other departments. British people knew their rule was based on the army of occupation. That was why they distrusted Indians. After Mr. Ranga Aiyar's speech the House adjourned till next day.

On the 15th MARCH resuming discussion on the military policy of the Government Mr. K. C. ROY said the principal test of size of military budget was their military and foreign policy. Strictly speaking, the Foreign Office here was only a sub-agency of the Foreign Office in Downing Street and the Foreign Office did a lot of useful work for His Majesty's Government without getting credit for it. They had been following on the frontier a most ruinous forward policy. He strongly contested the view that there was fear of a Russian invasion and if economy was to be effected, it was not by stabilising the rupee at 1s. 4d. or 1s. 6d. but by stabilising at Razmak and not proceeding further.

Coming to the question of Indianisation he acknowledged the great advance made in Indianisation in civil departments, but it was a scandal that after a century of British rule not even a single Indian staff captain had been produced in Indian army. Lord Curzon, by starting Imperial cadet corps, wanted absolutely to block the way to King's commissions but the King-Emperor upset that at the Imperial durbar. The Escher Committee sat, but, as Sir Krishna Gupta observed, it was not definitely asked to make recommendations in the light of reformed conditions. Sir Charles Munro and Lord Rawlinson gave them territorial force, a second line of defence and though General Shea's committee produced a valuable report, even in this purely Indian question the Governor-General in Council was nowhere and the Secretary of State was sitting over it for six months. Probably, the Sken report would hang till the Statutory Commission came out.

Touching the constitutional aspect of the matter, Mr. Roy said though the reforms recorded great advance over civil administration the authority of His Majesty's Government over Army matters remained supreme. The Commander-in-Chief was the nominee of Imperial General Staff approved by the King and the Government in this country had no hand in his selection. Then, again, he wanted Army administration to be modelled on methods adopted by other civilised countries. That distinguished General, late Sir James Willcocks, has in his book expressed

universal feeling of British officers in India that they could never replace a British officer in the Indian Army by Indian officers. The only solution to Mr. Roy's mind was that civilian element be introduced in Army administration to take note of Indian view. He would advocate an I. C. S. member for defence and an equal number of civilian members on the military council and also on the defence committee in India. The territorial force should be in charge of a civilian member. He complained that in their race for constitutional advance they were forgetting real factors. He wanted the house to take an intelligent view of the situation. There was no value of Swaraj without ability to defend the country and until the army was properly Indianised no honest Englishman would give Swaraj ; no honest Indian could take it.

Sir Purushotandas THAKURDAS at the outset complained of want of time for the Assembly to discuss demands for grants. Only six heads had been disposed of so far and at five this evening the guillotine would be applied for the remaining twenty crores of expenditure out of a total of Rs. 32 crores. The Assembly would like to discuss demands for New Delhi, a subject never discussed since 1921. In the Army Department, the Assembly was allowed to discuss only one-tenth of one per cent of expenditure. Was this fair ? There was provision of Rs. 5 lakhs for the Royal Indian Navy. Mr. Bridgenian had stated in Parliament that India wanted this. Sir Purushotandas declared :—While I yield to none in my aspirations for an Indian navy, it would be wrong to sanction anything which in point of expenditure would also be outside the reach of the Assembly although there may be the inducement of a few Indians being appointed in the Navy. This point should be borne in mind when the Bill would be discussed in the Simla session.

Referring to the transfer of the administration of Aden to the British Government, the speaker complained of breach of the promise given by the Government of India that the Assembly would be consulted. He wondered if the Government of India was fully consulted and if it had its approval. But the helplessness of Indians came home when it was remembered that Aden which was made attractive owing to the enterprise of Indians for the best part of a century was being taken away from India without the knowledge and consent of the Indian legislature. The huge military expenditure was a cruel joke at the Assembly and there was no justification in retaining the huge army for the sake of internal peace and in order to maintain this unwarrantedly huge army the Government was imposing a heavy taxation. The argument of the Government was that there was Bolshevik menace, but the Commander-in-Chief forgot that by effects of higher taxation he invited Bolshevism to start from within India. Why should there not be decrease of expenditure in other branches of the army while there was increase in the Air Forces ? Unless, therefore, there was a departmental advisory committee attached to the Army Department as in the case of other departments, there was no prospect of decreasing expenditure, not even in the matter of stores. He urged the Government to appoint an advisory committee.

Mr. HAIG told the House how he, as Collector of Canara district in Bombay presidency, welcomed the passage of the Territorial Force Act and succeeded in this mainly non-martial district to raise some volunteers. When he was transferred to Poona, the heart of Maharashtra, he had expected to find better response but there was not a single youth coming forward. The speaker had experience of such service. Every amateur soldier had unpleasant shocks, but he asked Mr. Jayakar and Mr. Kelkar, had they found a single recruit for Territorial Force.

Mr. Kelkar : What are the careers open to them ?

Mr. Haig : Service in Territorial Force is not a career. It is one of the privileges of citizenship to serve in the National Army (applause). (A voice : There are humiliations).

Mr. Haig : I repudiate that suggestion. Service in the Territorial Force is the same as in ordinary unit. Let Mr. Jayakar tell these to Mahatta sepoys and they would repudiate the suggestion.

Mr. Jayakar :—I was referring to racial distinctions.

Mr. Haig : There are no racial distinctions among sepoys. I am not speaking in a carping spirit. I invite Mr. Jayakar that when he goes back to Poona let him use his eloquence in raising recruits. There are still 3,700 ranks to be filled in the force. You do not expect a foreign collector to go and preach the value of service in the national militia.

Mr. Haig suggested to the Commander-in-Chief that if possible training be held at district headquarters or the nearest military district.

Sir Darcy LINDSAY joined Sir Purushotamdas in regretting that the arrangement mutually arrived at amongst non-official groups for expediting discussion had broken down. He wished leaders would exercise greater control on back-benches. As for the Territorial Force, Sir Darcy Lindsay remarked that everyone felt humiliated. He, 45 years ago, was a volunteer in London and felt very humiliated at the most wonderful vocabulary of abusive terms that the Drill-master used (laughter). He particularly emphasised to-day the harm done by this constant abuse of the Government. A friend of his who had been a member of the Assembly writing to him from London stated that the British public was puzzled about India. On the one hand, there was the Locarno spirit and Imperial Conference resolutions and on the other, they were asked to explain communal tension and speeches and votes in the Assembly. Much would depend on the feeling in England in 1929 and this would largely depend on what happened in India and the Assembly particularly and they were looking forward to a large measure of co-operation between all parties and the Government. Sir Darcy agreed with Mr. Roy in urging stabilising at Razmak and he repudiated the suggestion that the European group was tied to the Government wheel.

Mr. HOWELL said that Mr. Roy had stabbed him in the back like a Mahsud (laughter), but the Foreign Secretary was glad to have an opportunity of explaining the Frontier policy which was one of the great problems India had to face. The frontier policy which Mr. Roy had denounced aimed at nothing more than the defence of the people in British India (hear, hear). Mr. Roy did not like statistics because with them they could prove anything. The speaker's contention was that without them they could prove nothing (hear, hear). He gave the House figures of how year by year from 1919-20 onwards raids had decreased and also loss of life and property. The speaker was responsible during the past three years for giving effect to their policy in Waziristan. In 1919-20 they had 324 raids, 149 British subjects killed, 197 wounded and Rs. 127 lakhs worth property carried away. They had last year only eleven raids, 10 persons killed one wounded and Rs. 10 lakhs worth of property lost (Applause). These figures spoke for themselves. Taking figures for military and civil expenditure in Waziristan, he showed that while in 1922-23 military expenditure amounted to Rs. 747 lakhs and civil expenditure at Rs. 45 lakhs, figures for the last year would show that military expenditure had been stabilised at about Rs. 280 lakhs of which Rs. 39 lakhs were spent on road construction and Rs. 58 lakhs on civil expenditure. These figures did not prove the frontier policy was ruinous (Applause). Mr. Roy had condemned the forward policy and yet told them to sit tight at Razmak and not go to Wana. He did not know that Razmak was nearer Afghan territory than Wana (Laughter). As far Wana the real difficulty was one of road. He wished the member paid a visit to the frontier to find out the purpose roads were serving. Some Mahsuds owned cars and came down to settled districts more frequently than before. These roads were agents of civilisation in the same manner as roads constructed in the Highlands of Scotland 200 years ago. (Applause). He mentioned not in a spirit of vainglory that recently Mahsuds gave him a garden party and paid for it. (Laughter). Wazirs did the same and at these parties speeches were made acknowledging that relations between them and the Government had never been better than now. (Applause). He was not foolish enough to believe all that was said by them. (Laughter), but on the whole they spoke sincerely.

As for Aden, Sir Purushotamdas had charged them with breach of promise. This term he thought was applied only in case of marriages (laughter), but marriage between India and Aden remained undissolved. The charge probably was one of breach of faith, but he denied it as the Assembly was to be given an opportunity to discuss the matter if the decision were adverse; but he held that the decision was favourable to India. He gave the history of how since the time of the Welby Commission the Home Government contributed half the military expenditure in Aden until the war. The Home Government informed them in 1917 that they wished to retain in their own hands direct military and political control of India. They had done so ever since. What the House was interested in was the fate of the Indian settlement which numbered 3,000 out of a population of 36,000. Last year, Aden cost India Rs. 49 lakhs and odd. A fresh agreement had been entered with and under it they would pay £250,600 for first three years and £150,000 thereafter or one-third of the total expenditure, whichever was less. That was a favourable

bargain and he did not see how anyone who knew a little arithmetic could question it.

Mr. GOSWAMI compared the military organisation and expenditure to the design and extravagance of New Delhi. He was convinced that military expenditure stood at a figure higher than the one presented to the Assembly because they should include in it such items as watch and ward in the North Western Frontier, etc. He protested against Mr. Haig's insinuation.

Mr. Haig rose to explain. Mr. Goswami would not give way. Mr. Haig stood on when there rose cries of "Order, Order" from the Congress benches. The President wanted to hear Mr. Haig if his was personal explanation. Mr. Haig assured he had no desire to ridicule the grievances of the young men who joined the training corps. He merely pointed out that it was entirely in normal circumstances that certain inevitable incidents took place to which these young men attached undue importance.

Mr. Goswami : I do not grudge Mr. Haig the privilege of a supplementary speech, but you cannot treat with ridicule the susceptibilities of educated young men. It is a crime to do so. Military expenditure was a perpetuation of India's impotency, but even to England a time would come which might not be propitious and when the Commander-in-Chief might come to India for contributions in men and money. Such things had happened before and might happen again.

Sir H. S. GOUR, in supporting the motion for reduction, justified Mr. Jayakar's contention that young men in the Indian Territorial Forces were treated in a bad manner so as to make them feel a sense of racial inferiority and recalled the instance of Delhi University Corps where when a second company was being formed during his Vice-Chancellorship members of the first company were complaining to him about racialism exhibited there. Continuing, Dr. Gour read extracts from the Esher Committee's report and the Government of India's recommendations thereon and said that whereas the Indian Government were desiring to limit the object of the Indian Army to the defence of India alone, the War Office had overruled their view. The speaker also criticised the British Government's action in overruling the joint recommendations of the Government of India and the Incheape Committee who had asked for a reduction of ten thousand white troops because that would have meant a charge on British revenues. Sir H. S. Gour, concluding held that the only solution was to make the army budget viable.

The COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF was applauded as he rose to reply to the debate and replying to Mr. Jinnah's criticism he said he did not wish to recapitulate during his budget speech the policy and programme already known and from the Military point of view there was nothing extraordinary in the past. The Frontier condition was even abnormally quiet.

As regards the Sandhurst Committee report they must concede that the Secretary of State was not an autocrat who would read the report and at once say he accepted it. He had to refer the matter to other departments of His Majesty's Government probably even to the Imperial Defence Committee. The same applied to the Shra Committee report. He could not give details as his mouth was closed. He had heard an expression of opinion that because they did not accept further reduction in the army budget, therefore they refused to accept the Incheape cuts. This was not so. When he spoke last year, the very day coincided with the day when the last of the three British regiments whose despatch the Incheape Committee had recommended was embarking. He claimed that every one of the cuts specifically recommended by Lord Incheape's Committee had been fully carried out (applause) and expenditure which stood at Rs. 67.75 lakhs when the Committee sat had been brought down to Rs. 54.92 lakhs. Lord Rawlinson had not accepted the pious hope of the Incheape Committee.

Mr. Chamanlal : Where did he say that ?

Commander-in-Chief : Here it is in the Committee report. "If a further fall in prices takes place, we consider that it may be possible after a few years to reduce the military budget to a sum not exceeding 50 crores although the Commander-in-Chief does not subscribe to this opinion." The speaker contended there was no fall in prices of either foodstuff or equipment.

Turning now to the suggestion of Mr. Jinnah that they should follow the American system of keeping a skeleton army, the Commander-in-Chief asked whether in India such a course was possible.

Mr. Jinnah, interrupting, stated that he did not recommend following the American system but wanted the Government to make the Territorial Force a real second line of defence.

The Commander-in-Chief said he had great admiration for the courage and bravery of American soldiers; but the last war showed they were untrained. The same opinion was held by Ludendorff. Though America entered in April 1917, it took them a year before their division landed in France. America has an invulnerable frontier and could be content with skeleton units. Could they follow that policy in India where at any moment they might have trouble on the Frontier? Indeed, in the opinion of some experts they were not sufficiently equipped to meet all situations. They could not spare more than four divisions for outside service as against 8 before the war. They could not lose time on the frontier as the member from that part could tell them.

Sir Abdul Qayum : Were not troops carried in lorries from Khyber ?

The Commander-in-Chief : Thank God there were lorries. Otherwise, they would have fallen. We cannot lose time and must be prepared to fight at a moment's notice. As for the territorial force, he had asked Mr. Jayakar to give details of the grievances of the Bombay University training corps. The speaker visited Benares recently with Pandit Mulaviya and found the boys extremely keen and quite contented. The same was the case at Lahore and he hoped also at other centres. He would look into any grievances and assured the House that the Army Department were ever ready to work in sympathy with the House and with the people of India.

#### REDUCTION MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Kunzru's cut of thousand rupees was then put to vote and carried by 63 against 44.

#### VOTING ON THE ARMY DEMAND

Dewan CHIAMANLAL, next asked the House to throw out the whole of the Army Department estimate. He asked the Foreign Secretary whether it was not a fact that the transfer of political and military control of Aden to the British Government during the war was unofficial and temporary and that it was now made permanent? "Are you not humbugging us? What are we here for if you do not consult us?"

Pandit Motilal NEHRU, in opposing the Army demand, referred to Mr. Howell's speech in which the latter had talked of parties given by the Mahsuds and thereby the inference was given out that the mind of the frontier had changed. This reminded the Pandit of the incident in the impeachment of Warren Hastings. It was said on behalf of Hastings that he was given numerous entertainments and that the Indian people had no complaints against him. Burke said : "India is a country where they worship small-pox. No wonder that they gave these entertainments." The same remark will apply to a majority of the farewell addresses given to retiring officials in India. Pandit Nehru asked if the Commander-in-Chief was right in holding that he could not spare even one officer out, how did His Excellency send contingents to China? Concluding, the Pandit said : "Sir Darcy Lindsay gave us a story which, I think, was very apposite. It was the story of a sailor who tried to rescue a drowning man. Well, he caught him by the head as it floated on the surface and asked him who he was. He said he was a Jew, on which the sailor gave his head another ducking, but he bobbed it up again and the sailor asked : 'Will you be a Christian?' and the poor man was exhausted and in a faint voice he said 'yes.' Then he let him go, saying 'then die the death of a Christian.' Now, Sir, apply that story to India which was sinking just before these reforms came. India was sinking after Amritsar and when these reforms came, nationalist India said 'we shall not co-operate.' The sinking head was raised up and was asked 'will you co-operate?' Sinking India said 'no.' It was allowed to go down. Then it was lifted up again in an exhausted condition. That was after the first councils had met and had run their course. It was asked again, 'will you co-operate?' India said 'yes, on honourable terms.' It was then let go after some formal ceremonies of baptism by which I refer to my friend the Home Member's Committee known as the Muddiman Committee and certain other committees. Eventually, the answer was given 'no honourable co-operation.' The answer amounted to that. India was let go and it was again floated. But, Sir, India is not dead and it is not going to die, at any rate not in the way in which most people would wish it die, that is to say, any co-operation when it is not honourable. It would rather die in honourable non-co-operation than in co-operation."

Lala Lajpat Rai said that the economic exploitation of India and emasculation of the nation were writ large. The latter was even more painful than the former and he expected every Indian to vote for throwing out the demand.



Sir Basil Blackett, replying to Pandit Motilal, assured that the troops were spared for China on the understanding that if need arose reinforcements would be made available to India. It was different from a permanent measure. He did not want to express publicly their disagreement but of course he did not accept that not a single man or a single rupee could be taken off and particularly the rupee.

Col. Gidney recorded his protest against the treatment meted out to his community who had been knocking at the door of the Army for 100 years in vain.

#### ARMY DEMAND REJECTED

The entire demand for the Army Department was rejected by 56 votes against 47.

#### OTHER DEMANDS PASSED

Before the House adjourned all the remaining demands were passed without division except the vote for aviation which was carried by 48 against 15. Thus in all five demands were discussed out of 79 and cuts made were of two rupees in the vote for Posts and Telegraphs, the total rejection of Army Estimates and reduction of vote for touring expenses of the Executive Council to one rupee.

### Discussion on Currency Bill

On the 16th MARCH, after interpellations, discussion on Mr. Kelkar's amendment to the Currency Bill was resumed.

Mr. Vidyasagar PANDYA moved his amendment covering a foolscap in print on the subject of gold mohurs and gold standard. He said in this land of plague and cholera, a new epidemic had been added, namely, visitations of Royal Commissions and Committees. (Laughter.) Though the recommendation for gold standard and gold currency was made a quarter of century ago and the Secretary of State and the Government of India accepted it, practically nothing had been done in that direction. On the other hand, they had now been offered bullion standard which was a retrograde step. His amendments he said differed from Mr. Kelkar's in that he did not value sovereigns in terms of rupees but treated rupees as subsidiary or a token coin. He allowed the Government eight years to reduce the rupee to a token coin and would make the rupee token coin after ten years.

Mr. Prakasam said while Sir Basil Blackett had condemned unlimited legal tender character of the rupee as a stumbling block to the gold standard the Finance Member had retained this character of the rupee, while legal tender character of gold coin was to be removed.

Mr. Sessa Iyengar held that the fears expressed by the Hilton Young Commission against immediate introduction of gold standard did not bear examination.

Pandit Malaviya said the question was of vital importance and while accepting Sir Basil's assurance that there would be no difficulties placed in the way of members raising the same issue on Gold Standard Reserve Bank Bill, he felt that the earliest opportunity should be used to explain the history of the case and press the people's point of view. Beginning with the court of directors the Pandit reviewed the history of the case and various expressions of opinions of committees, commissions and Finance Members. The history gave eloquent lesson of how numerous efforts made in 120 years to give India gold standard and gold currency were thwarted. The Chamberlain Commission of 1914 had admitted that in this matter Indian sentiment must prevail and the Pandit declared that Indian sentiment was for gold currency. As he was reading an extract Sir Basil remarked that it had been read previously. Pandit Malaviya reminded Sir Basil of the opinion of Fielding that "If you tell a thing to an Englishman once he ignores it, if you tell him again he takes some notice of it; so it is that I am reading it a third time."

Sir Basil Blackett, opposing the amendments, said the adoption of these at this stage would prejudice discussion of gold bullion standard and reserve bank bills and the introduction of that standard and gold currency was carefully considered by the Royal Commission who unanimously held that the risks involved were so great that it would not be in India's interests to adopt it at the present moment and suggested gold bullion standard as the quickest method of reaching the goal. By demonetising the sovereign, they did not prejudice the question whether the future system should be sovereign or gold mohur either as element in circulation or as major factor in circulation. The proposals of the commission did not contemplate

gold coin circulation at present. That good-will which was required for the reform of the currency system could be achieved by dropping the amendment and taking up the question in committee stage on bullion standard and reserve bank bill. Otherwise, they would be imposing on the Government obligations which in working would result in great loss of money for the time being and disaster to the currency system. He offered as a compromise, if the House agreed, to omit the clause relating to demonetization of sovereign which would leave the sovereign worth Rs. 10 for the time being.

Mr. Doraiswami Iyengar started with the ancient history of Hindu Kings in whose reign gold coin circulated. It was with the incoming of British rule that silver air was introduced (Laughter). But the ghost of gold coin had been haunting them. The chief abettor of the much-condemned hoarding of gold was the Government. The speaker did not fear non-monetary use of gold coins. In fact, he used to receive his fees from clients in sovereigns. (Laughter) As for popularity of the present paper and nickel coinage in India, it was like the lion being starved in a cage for days and then taking to even grass. At any rate there should be no objection to Mr. Kelkar's amendment which merely wanted gold to be christened at the royal mint, and contemplated a programme of gradual realisation of gold currency with gradual realisation of responsible Government. (Laughter)

Sir Purushotamdas Thakurdas read his observations in the Commission's report on the subject of demonetization of the sovereign and half sovereign and declared that the course taken by the Government in respect of currency policy had only confirmed him in his opinion that demonetization was not only not necessary but that the Assembly would be badly advised if it agreed to it. Sir Basil was wrong in stating that acceptance of the amendment would wreck the bill. The speaker assured that he was the last person to agree to such a course, whatever his views on the ratio. As for the so-called compromise, it was nothing more than asking the Assembly practically to accept demonetization by leaving the sovereign to be worth ten rupees while at 1/6 ratio it should be worth Rs. 13-5-4. He was surprised that such a suggestion should come from the Finance Member.

#### AMENDMENTS REJECTED

Closure was again applied and the Deputy President accepted it and it was carried by sixty votes against fifty. The House immediately divided on the two amendments. It rejected that of Mr. Vidyasagar Pandya for the introduction of the scheme of gold currency by 60 to 50 votes and rejected the restricted proposal of Mr. Kelkar for minting of mohurs in return for gold by 60 to 49.

Mr. Shunmukham Chetti moved another amendment and held that Sir Basil could not intelligently convince the House why demonetization which was not essential in England for a gold bullion standard was essential in India.

Sir Basil Blackett said he did not even wish to express any opinion on the subject. To fix the sovereign as legal tender at Rs. 13-5-4 would mean that Government might as well give up its whole legislative programme of currency reform. He was still prepared to withdraw the clause.

Mr. Kelkar said a Bombay merchant had described the sovereign as "the cement of the Empire." In fact it was coming up to international use. Why should India be deprived of it? But if the sovereign was to be demonetized, there must be another gold coin to take its place. The debate had not concluded when the House was adjourned till Monday the 21st.

#### RELEASE OF BENGAL DETENUS

On the 21st MARCH Sir Alexander Muddiman, making a statement in the Assembly said that the policy of the Government regarding those detained under Regulation III or the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act in connection with the Bengal revolutionary conspiracy has been and still is that the detention of no man should last longer than is essential in the interests of public safety. The Government are convinced that terrorist conspiracy is still in active existence and that consequently it is not possible to take steps in the direction of release of those about whom there is no reasonable doubt that they would utilise their liberty to resume their previous activities. They are, however, anxious to pursue as quickly as possible the gradual release of individuals whose conduct gives reason for hoping that they will not abuse their liberty. The Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act provides for a considerable degree of elasticity in the treatment of those who are dealt with under it and enables the Government to transfer from jail to

less strict forms of supervision persons whose past record and present conduct would not justify their unconditional release. Individuals of this class may be directed to reside in a particular village or in their homes. The practical results of transferring men in this manner to village or home domicile are fully watched, and the Government are enabled to observe whether action taken is justified by events and thus to determine the possibility of further extension of such action. In order to show what has been done in this direction of discriminating treatment of detenus, I may mention that out of 171 persons dealt with under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act from the beginning, 75 have been placed in village domicile and thirteen in home domicile, while 26 have been released. The number now remaining in jail is 54. Of those arrested under Regulation III, 31 were subsequently transferred to Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act and are included in the figures given above. 16 at present remain in jail under Regulation III. In the last two and a half months, the Government of Bengal have issued orders for the transfer of 19 detenus from jail to village or home domicile under the Act and have released 7. The Government of India have also had under review the cases of those who are still detained under Regulation III. They are considering one of these State prisoners on medical grounds. In respect of 4 others, they are satisfied that detention in jail is no longer necessary and they are, therefore, cancelling warrants under Regulation III so that action may be taken to bring them under Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act with a view to their transfer to village domicile. It must be understood that practical results of this action as exhibited in the conduct of men thus placed in village or home domicile requires constant attention of the Government. If it is ascertained that such men are reverting to terrorist conspiracy, the Government will not hesitate to deal with them again under their powers.

## The Currency Bill

### CLAUSES II AND III PASSED

After this, the Currency Bill discussion was resumed and Mr. Chetti's amendment for giving sovereign value of Rs. 13-5-4 was after further discussion defeated by 63 votes against 49. The House then passed clauses 2 and 3 after amending clause 2, on the motion of Sir Basil Blackett, by providing that coins shall be received at any Government Currency office and at any time after the 30th day of September 1927 and at any Government Treasury other than a Sub-Treasury at bullion value of such coins calculated at the rate of 847512 grains troy of fine gold per rupee.

### AMENDMENT TO CLAUSE V

Clause V was next taken up. Mr. Sesha Iyengar in order to guarantee the free flow of gold from in and out of India moved an amendment to the effect that any person could buy gold at the rate of Rs. 23-11-4 per tola at Calcutta or Bombay with a minimum of 40 tolas and Government would have the option to offer sterling for immediate delivery in London. Sir Basil said it would be the immediate concern of the currency authorities during the period before the Gold Standard Bill was put in operation to accumulate as much gold as possible so that on the first January 1931 gold exchange and bullion could be offered not at option but as an obligation.

Sir Basil Blackett thereupon moved an amendment to Clause V intending to impose an obligation on Government to sell gold in exchange in the shape of a new clause which recommended imposition of an obligation on Government to sell gold or sterling. The new clause runs as follows:—

"The Governor-General in Council shall sell to any person who makes a demand in that behalf at the office of the Controller of Currency at Calcutta or of the Deputy Controller of Currency at Bombay and pays the purchase price in legal tender currency gold for delivery at the Bombay mint at the rate of Rs. 21-3-10 per tola of fine gold or at the option of the Controller or Deputy Controller as the case may be sterling for immediate delivery in London at an equivalent rate provided that no person shall be entitled to demand an amount of gold or sterling of less value than that of 1065 tolas of fine gold.

"For the purpose of determining the equivalent rate applicable to the sale of sterling under this section Rs. 21-3-10 shall be deemed to be equivalent to such sum in sterling as is required to purchase one tola of fine gold in London at the

rate at which the Bank of England is bound by law to give sterling in exchange for gold after deduction therefrom of an amount representing the normal cost per tola of transferring gold bullion in bulk from Bombay to London including the interest on its value during transit.

"The Governor-General in Council shall from time to time determine the equivalent rate in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (2) and shall notify the rate so determined in 'The Gazette of India.'"

Mr. Kelkar opposed the amendment of Sir Basil as the option of buying gold or gold exchange should lie with the purchaser and not with the Government as proposed in the amendment. The amendment of Sir Basil was then put and carried.

Mr. Chetti's amendment to the scheme that at least from the 1st January 1931 the rupee should be linked to gold instead of being linked to exchange was replied to by Sir Basil who promised to use his utmost endeavours to get the Reserve Bank and the Gold Bullion Standard Bill in a form which would satisfy as many people as possible. He was anxious that the little Bill (laughter) now before the House should not be the ridiculous mouse coming out of the Commission's report. Everyone was agreed that the Government should not be the currency authority. (Laughter.) With all the goodwill in the world he could not accede to Mr. Chetti's amendment. The amendment of Mr. Chetti was lost and the amendment altering the language of the preamble so as to provide the insertion of "Gold or sterling exchange" for the words "gold exchange" was accepted.

#### MOTION FOR FINAL READING OF THE BILL

The Bill, as amended, was then recommended for passage by Sir Basil who, in a short speech, affirmed that nothing in the measure was intended to prejudice the frank and full discussion of those subjects covered by the Reserve Bank and Gold Bullion Standard Bill. If, during discussion of the Bill, he had used expressions which in any way offended any members then he apologised to them.

Sir Victor Sassoon advised the House to throw out the Bill. Sir Basil Blackett was tying them to the chariot wheel of the Federal Reserve Bank, the very thing Sir Basil was advising them three years ago not to do. The Bill proposed to fix irrevocably the price of the rupee in terms of gold prices. If the prices fell down, further adjustment would be necessary. There was the possibility of China wanting gold in future. If these fears proved groundless, what was lost if the decision was postponed? The only result of throwing out the Bill would be to oppose the establishment of a Reserve Bank and gold bullion standard which would not be an unmixed evil. Was the establishment of this Bank and the bullion standard of so great importance as to justify them taking an irrevocable step?

Dr. Sulrawardy, in a humorous speech, said if the findings of the Currency Commission could not be accepted, there was lesser reason to accept the opinion of the Currency League. His action in supporting 1s. 6d. was not because he was bound down to the chariot wheel of any party, but because he had the interest of his constituency at heart.

Mr. Jumnadas Mehta recounted his objections to 1s. 6d. whose maintenance through currency manipulation had already caused a loss of Rs. 30 crores. Non-officials were, he said, very indignant at Government's treatment. He had not concluded when the President adjourned the House.

On the 22nd MARCH the Assembly met to continue discussion on the Currency Bill, to-day being the sixth sitting for the purpose. After interpellations, Mr. JAMNADAS resumed his speech in opposing the final passage of the Currency Bill. He explained at length the evil effect of the passage of the Bill on industries, labour, agriculture, and national finance. All gold in possession of the people would depreciate in value by 12 half per cent causing a loss of nearly £250 millions. He read out the recent labour troubles showing that the evil effects of the higher ratio had already started and dismissals of labourers and reduction in their wages were multiplying at a rapid pace.

Sir PURUSHOTHAMDAS THAKURDAS said that Mr. Jumnadas had shown that adjustment of prices had just begun. He asked Sir Basil to reply to the nine points put forward by the speaker, so that it would go into record. The charge would always lie at the door of the Finance Member of the Government of India that India's resources to the extent of £25 millions were deliberately and avoidably frittered away to maintain a ratio arranged between them and the India Office. There were only £5 half millions left in the Paper Currency Reserve and the speaker would not be

surprised if Sir Basil soon borrowed in London to maintain his ratio or exported gold from India. He read out to the House the opinion of a missionary, a white man, working among agriculturists who had written to him on the 18th February that for the purpose of bolstering up the Budget, rural interests had been sacrificed and whatever good was done through measures of rural improvement would be counter-balanced by the loss caused by the 1s. 6d. ratio. He had received a moving account of how thousands of artisans in Jaipur and Benares were threatened with unemployment in consequence of 1s. 6d. ratio. India's silver saving in ornaments were more than in the rupee, causing greater loss. He laid particular stress on the point that European newspapers and Europeans in India were all for 1s. 4d., and he paid his tribute of admiration to the courage of conviction of three European members who voted for 1s. 1d.

Mr. Arthur MOORE warmly repudiated the suggestion that the European members were voting at the bidding of the Government. Those who sat behind Sir Darcy Lindsay were no less patriotic than those who sat behind Pandit Motilal and Lala Lajpat Rai. Indeed, they were thinking of the interests of no other country nor even their own country (England), but of India alone. If the Assembly depreciated the value of the rupee, it would be lowering the value of the goods until gold prices adjusted themselves. The Finance Member agreed with him in this statement.

Sir Basil : In this statement I agree. (Laughter.)

Continuing, Mr. Arthur said if they lowered the ratio, then the value of silver savings would be reduced by 11 per cent which would mean dead loss to India.

Mr. JINNAH said that though Mr. Suhrawardy had yesterday let loose his tongue of calumny he would not take notice of it as the speech was maiden oration but he must remark that Mr. Suhrawardy had given no reason whatever for supporting except that his common sense dictated it. Even common sense must have reason behind it.

Pandit MALAVIYA said it was his sacred duty to speak on the Bill, for no measure of greater importance had come before the Assembly during his membership. It was a measure for which the people of India would ever be sorry and would hold Government responsible for committing this great injury. As to enormity of evil he quoted from the issue of "Statist", a London journal, of August 1916 which gave honest opinion on the views of an English writer that the Government's post-war policy was to stabilise the ratio at as high a figure as possible and that 1s. 6d. had been previously determined by the Finance Member. There was no parallel in the history of India to the present case and the manner in which the Government had fixed 1s. 6d. Not only it was made impossible for the Commission to recommend any other ratio but the members were deliberately nominated not for probity and ability but for their support of 1s. 6d. Officials acted as one man at the bidding of Sir Basil Blackett. Indeed, it was on the word of one man or two men, one here and one in London that the whole currency problem had been settled. The speaker had advocated freedom of vote from the beginning, but Sir Basil would not let his group do it. They all knew the manner in which pressure had been brought even inside the house by all means to procure a majority of three votes; but eliminating Government block it was clear that Indian opinion was for 1s. 4d. and in this matter, as the "Statist" had said, it was Indian public opinion that must prevail. He ended :— This measure, Sir, will be an enormous crime against the Indian people if it is put on the statute book.

The closure of the debate was then carried and the House rose for lunch.

After lunch, Sir Basil BLACKETT replied to the debate dealing with the arguments of non-officials, mainly of Sir Purushotamadas Thakurdas. He regretted that the discussion on the ratio should have attracted such warm attention on the part of its admirers thereby obscuring interest in other portions of currency reform. He had himself stumped the country in one side and the Currency League had, on the other side, done its best to bring arguments opposing 1s. 6d. ratio. If more had voted for 1s. 6d. it was because the Government had done so much to bring the true facts before the country for consideration. He still claimed that there was no argument on the side of 1s. 4d. which was not answered in advance or in some of the excellent speeches made on behalf of the Government during the discussion. Sir Purushotandas had given 9 points to his 11 points. These 9 points were in a great measure simply a confirmation of his eleven points, none of which had really been challenged. He claimed that the prices had in a preponderant degree adjusted

themselves to 1s. 6d. ratio and not to 1s. 4d. for gold or sterling since 1917 and the only ratio at which prices had the opportunity of adjusting themselves had been 1s. 6d. Answering the points of Sir Purushotamadas, the Finance Member said that Mr. Kikabhai Premchand had from his own experience in business replied to the charge of the disastrous consequence by the adoption of 1s. 6d. ratio. In this connection, Sir Basil warmly protested against the unfair attacks made on Mr. Premchand and the nominated members for their not taking the view of the vocal school of Bombay. His own view was that the majority for 1s. 6d. would have been greater if the Congress Party had given freedom of vote. However, Sir Basil emphasised that no opportunity arose to stabilise the rupee at 1s. 4d. in 1924. Indeed if this was done the results would have been as disastrous as it would have been if it had been stabilised at two shillings in 1920. The so-called opportunity referred to by Sir Purushotamadas was a doubtful one. High prices in terms of the rupee were in no way disadvantageous to the well-being of the masses. Instability of prices caused much greater disturbance in a country like India than in industrialised countries in the West. However, on the whole, the results of the ratio would be advantageous to the masses (applause). He too had received letters about 30 a week from all parts of India wishing him Godspeed in his fight for the masses and he read a letter from an Indian who did not wish his identity to be disclosed supporting 1s. 6d.

As for deflation of currency, he did not understand what was meant by Sir Purushotamadas by normal expansion of currency. When prices were rising, currency had to expand and when they were falling currency was contracted. He would lay a statement on the table of the House giving his reply to the statement issued by Sir Purushotamadas and others in their joint memorandum alleging concealed taxation. He strongly protested against the accusations that the Government had not acted honestly in the matter. "The Government has never approached this subject from any other point of view except that of the interest of the masses."

#### CURRENCY BILL PASSED

The Bill was then put to vote and was passed by the Assembly by 69 votes against 51 amidst official cheers and opposition cries of shame.

### The Finance Bill

#### RESOLUTION ON TEA INDUSTRY WITHDRAWN

The House then took up the Finance Bill. Sir Basil Blackett, moving its consideration, announced that he had decided to withdraw the resolution he had tabled in connection with the tea industry in order to enable him to negotiate with the industry the exact manner in which tax on non-agricultural income was to be imposed without loss to the Indian exchequer. The tea duty was being abolished on that understanding. He acknowledged that there was some distinction necessary between tea gardens in various places. In some cases, no agricultural portion was above 50 per cent, in others below that.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar, expressed his surprise that the Finance Member had not observed the principle of indicating the effect of voting on the demands by the House as to whether the Government was accepting the cuts or restoring them and to what extent funds were needed under the Finance Bill.

Sir Basil, interrupting, remarked that the cuts made no material difference.

Mr. Iyengar said this was wide of the mark. The House must know what had been done with regard to the cuts carried by it. He particularly protested against the manner in which the House was being trifled with in that Sir Basil was withdrawing his resolution and wanted now to take his decision irrespective of the view of the House.

#### REDUCTION OF SALT DUTY

In the consideration of the Finance Bill to-day, discussion centred round the amendment for the reduction of salt duty from Rs. 1-4-0 a maund to As. 8, As. 10, As. 12 and Re. 1. The first amendment by Mr. C. Doraiswami Iyengar was lost without a division as Lala Lajpat Rai had advised the Assembly to concentrate on Mr. Prakasam's amendment for ten annas, that is, a reduction of the existing tax by half. At the same time, Lalaji criticised the methods of granting monopoly to a favoured few. Sir Basil Blackett promised to enquire into the question of monopoly if specific complaints were made. On the question of amendment, he pointed out

that the effect of reducing salt duty to ten annas would be that there would be loss of Rs. 3,12,00,000 and remission of provincial contributions would, to that extent, be affected.

Despite this warning the Assembly carried Mr. Prakasam's amendment by 50 against 48 votes amidst unofficial cheers. The House then adjourned.

#### REDUCTION IN PRICE OF POSTCARD

On the 23rd MARCH, the Assembly met an hour earlier than usual and continued the consideration of the Finance Bill.

Mr. Doraiswami Iyengar moved reduction of the price of postcard to quarter anna and advocated it in the interest of the masses as since doubling of its rate poor people were using lesser number of postcards.

Sir B. N. Mitra, replying, showed that the loss as a result of the amendment would be a crore of rupees. He contested the view that the poor were suffering on account of the existing rates. The proposed reduction would retard postal development in the country and reduce its efficiency. The postal facilities at present were largely used by the urban population. U. S. A. subsidised the postal department for the sake of official correspondence. He refuted the charge that the department was over-staffed. If the motion was carried there was an extra crore to come from especially as prices and wages had gone up considerably of late.

The amendment was rejected by 53 to 61 and the schedule of the present rates was accepted.

#### REDUCTION IN MOTOR DUTY.

The House then discussed the proposed reduction in motor duty. Mr. Prakasam moved an amendment for restoring the 30 per cent. duty, being a justifiable tax on luxury. This was rejected.

#### EXPORT DUTY ON RAW HIDES.

Mr. A. Rangaswami IYENGAR moved an amendment for keeping the 5 per cent. export duty on raw hides which the bill proposed to abolish. Tanning industry, he said, was the chief industry of his province and indeed was a key industry as was proved during the war. When the Government assumed control of leather manufacture, it was necessary to encourage and protect such industry. Abolition of the small export duty would drive it to rack and ruin. He did not agree with the Fiscal Commission and the Todhunter Commission reports on the subject and held that the levy of export duty on raw hides was quite proper. By thus saving their semi-tanned goods, they would be helping the industry to build up manufacturing of leather goods. The argument that inferior hides were hit had no force after the reduction of export duty to 5 per cent and this leather was now being consumed internally to the full. Sir Basil had acted in response to the Associated Chambers in Calcutta who were interested in the export of raw hides and as in a number of other cases where Sir Basil had acted on the advice of the Associated Chambers he had done so hastily and without regard to Indian interests. If Sir Basil was opposed to the export duty on principle let him refer the case to the Tariff Board and propose abolition of the duty next year by giving protection to the tanning industry in some other form. The speaker quoted the opinion of Sir Gordon Fraser that the tanning industry was just reviving and should not be nipped in the bud by the Government's proposals.

Mr. Dwarakaprasad Misra, in supporting the amendment, emphasised the views of Dr. Paranjpye and Sardar Jogendra Singh on the Taxation Committee.

Sir Walter WILSON, opposing the amendment, admitted that the view of the Associated Chambers of Commerce was not unanimous, but pointed out that the majority was in favour of the Government proposal to withdraw the duty. If it could be shown that the tanning industry needed protection, then the proper way to tackle it was to grant bounties, but not by continuing to impose a tax which, was a war measure and which had considerably affected the export trade. After all, it must be remembered that only inferior quality of hides was exported as tanners in India consumed the superior quality. There could, therefore, be no harm to the tanning industry if export was stimulated. On economic grounds the tax was bad and fell on the producer and, therefore, must be abolished.

Mr. Shanmukham CHETTI informed that Sir Gordon Fraser had stated in his telegram that he could not approach Sir Walter Wilson as the Calcutta Chamber

favoured the withdrawal of the export duty. It was unwarranted to withdraw the duty without first conducting an enquiry into the position of the tanning industry which had demanded examination by the Tariff Board.

Mr. Lamb, supporting removal of the duty, said the duty was a millstone round the neck of the producers of hides. A fifty year old established firm in Burma which was dealing with 90 per cent of hides in the province has lost heavily owing to continued imposition of the duty.

Pandit Nilakanta argued that the withdrawal of the duty would encourage export resulting in increased slaughter of cows and consequent ill-effects on agriculture.

Sir PURUSOTHAMDAS said this was the third most important industry in the hands of Indians. The Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce at its session at Calcutta unanimously supported the continuance of export duty. He asked the house not to be swayed by technical aspect of objection to export duty but keep in view the history of the case. This industry stood so well by the Government and the allies during the war that with the unanimous consent of both Indian and British interests the export duty of five per cent was levied but now that seven years had passed since the conclusion of war, the Commerce Department was forgetting the service rendered by the industry. Sir Logi Watson had with 25 years' experience told the Government in the first Assembly of the desirability of building up this industry in India. Was the House going to tolerate the ruin of five hundred tanneries in Madras and take a retrograde step? In fact, it was the weakened policy of the Government that has made Calcutta, Karachi and Rangoon look forward to the abolition of the export duty. Let the House give a definite lead to-day that the legislature of India wanted to develop the tanning industry so that in the provinces people interested solely in the export of raw hides could divert their attention to training and follow the example of Madras and United Provinces.

Mr. U. Khin MAUNG endorsed every word of Mr. Lamb and was glad that in this matter all the four members from Burma were unanimous and was thankful to the Finance Member for his proposals. Let them follow the example of U. S. A. He hoped that the few export duties that still remained would also be removed as soon as possible.

Sir Charles INNES said the Government had satisfied themselves that the removal of the duty was the right course to take from the point of India as a whole. The object of the imposition of the duty in 1919 was to encourage the key industry (tanning industry) in the Empire. The duty was reduced to 5 per cent from 15 in 1923 because financial circumstances did not permit complete abolition. Now, however, they were in a position to remove the duty. During the last few years there had been a steady decrease in the export of hide. He did not suggest that export alone was responsible for it but in spite of this export duty there was hardly any expansion of the tanning industry in India. What then was wrong with the Madras tanning industry? Not the question of price but lack of demand and deterioration in quality. Sir Charles showed a representation from United States which imported the whole of Madras tanned hide complaining that the quality had deteriorated. But for these two factors, there would have been large decrease in export.

Sir Charles, proceeding, said that the Indian Industrial Congress of whom Sir Purushotamdas had spoken as having demanded retention of the duty might have got its due from the South Indian Chamber which was interested in the subject, but the Government of India must look not from the point of trade which, as Mr. Lamb said, had been hit very hard and producers lost heavily. Should Madras tanners get 5 per cent protection at the expenses of the large class of producers in India and Burma. After all, it was the surplus hide that was exported. Why should there be objection to it. Justice to Burma and India as a whole required the removal of the duty.

At this stage closure of the debate was applied but the Chair called on Mr. Ariff who, though interested in the tanning industry, was in favour of the Government's proposal in the interest of the producer of raw hides.

#### AMENDMENT CARRIED BY THE PRESIDENT'S CASTING VOTE

Mr. T. Prakasam strongly advocated the cause of the Madras tanning industry. Closure was again applied and the House accepted it and divided on Mr. Ranga-



swami Jyengar's amendment which resulted in 53 on either side. When the President announced the voting results there were cheers from all sides of the House. Mr. Patel, giving his first casting vote, said the practice of the Chair being to stand for status quo, he would vote for the amendment which was declared carried amidst non-official cheers by 54 to 53 votes.

#### EXPORT DUTY ON TEA

Mr. Mukhtar Singh next moved an amendment which was opposed to the proposed abolition of export duty on tea as the United Kingdom was the principal consumer of Indian tea. This proposal too was for imperial preference. He asked where would this preference end?

Mr. D. P. Misra supported the amendment in a speech which Sir Basil Blackett later complained was full of unfounded charges and allegations and inuendoes. The motion was lost.

#### OTHER AMENDMENTS

Mr. Mukhtar Singh made an unsuccessful attempt to exclude incometax in respect of joint income in Hindu families. Mr. Prakasam moved an amendment to omit the clause relating to supertax.

Sir Basil, replying, asked whether the mover wanted the Government to go without revenue from incometax. It must be a happy thing indeed.

Mr. Prakasam: But your Government was run in those good old days without any revenue from incometax.

Sir Victor Sassoon said while super-tax on companies had been abolished in England, it was still troubling Indian companies. As a matter of fact, it was in many cases acting as a double tax especially in the case of companies which held shares in other companies. The motion was negatived.

The Finance Bill was then passed clause by clause.

#### MOTION FOR PASSING THE FINANCE BILL

Sir Basil BLACKETT then moved that the Finance Bill as amended be passed. In doing so, he said that the reduction of Salt duty to ten annas would result in loss of revenue by three crores and twelve lakhs but there was certain amount of salt which had been issued on credit since 1st October last which would bring in revenue under 1-1 rate. He had not worked the figures of this but the House might rest assured that the total cost would be something under three crores. But he gained nine lakhs under hides with powerful aid from an unexpected quarter. (Hear, hear.) Instead, therefore, of Rs. 364 lakhs as budget surplus they had a surplus of rather under one crore. Obviously, this position entirely altered the question of remission of provincial contributions which would require reconsideration. He did not propose now to move for supplementary demands.

Dealing with the realised surplus of this year, it had been brought to the Government's notice from many quarters in this House and elsewhere that locus penitentiae was desired at any rate by those who voted for reduction of salt duty. (Cries of No, no, in which Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh's was the loudest.)

Sir Basil: I can understand the Member from Bihar crying 'no' because he has no interest whatever in remission of provincial contributions (laughter) but I wonder if Mr. Lajpat Rai would be able to satisfy the Punjab electorate on the result of his action yesterday. Does Mr. Jayakar realise in what position he has placed Bombay? Bengal members, perhaps, do not realise the possible effect of their action. Madras members when they return home next week would face the constituents but an opportunity may arise for change in the situation by action in another place (Council of State) and for reconsideration at a later stage.

Mr. C. S. Ranga AIYAR moved the rejection of the Finance Bill and urged throwing out of the Bill on the plea of grievances before supply. He also attacked the policy of the Government in not giving effect to the resolutions passed by the Assembly. Referring to Lord Birkenhead's speech calling for fidelity and friendship on the part of Indians, Mr. Ranga Aiyar asked what better proof of fidelity the Secretary of State asked for than that Non-co-operators and Swarajists had entered the House and taken the oath of allegiance to the King of England, his heirs and successors. Anything beyond was not imaginable. Did he expect that they in the House should dot the i's and cross the t's of the bureaucracy? Then he was very much mistaken. Indeed, to that, the only reply on the part of the popular representatives would be an emphatic and continuous "No." Lord Birkenhead had wanted to know the opinion of the rationally minded Indians. He had it in the form of a

demand for a round table conference in this House, all sections of which enthusiastically supported it. Continuing, Mr. Ranga Aiyar said that he could do no better than to recall the splendid and epoch-making speech delivered by Pandit Malaviya in leading the rejection of the Finance Bill in 1924 and in doing so the speaker would take the House aspect by aspect of that speech and deliver the speech at least for three hours. (Loud laughter in which Pandit Malaviya joined.) Mr. Ranga Aiyar proceeded to say that the grievances enumerated by the Pandit on that occasion still remained unredressed and held good now as much as then. When Mr. Aiyar was remarking that the bureaucracy on the other side deserved to go, Sir Alexander Muddiman, Sir Charles Innes, Sir Basil Blackett and Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra left the House one by one amidst continued cheering and laughter which lasted several minutes. The House then adjourned.

On the 24th MARCH resuming his speech against the Finance Bill Mr. Ranga Aiyar gave one by one a catalogue of his grievances on which he justified his advocacy for throwing out the Finance Bill. The cases of the Maharaja of Nabha, and of Mr. S. C. Mitra, a detainee member, were recalled. He twitted Sir Purushottamdas for being so eloquent on 1s. 4d. ratio, but backing out when the test came for throwing out the bills. Sir Purushottamdas was not in his seat, but was brought in by Sir Victor Sassoon and was cheered as he entered.

Mr. Ranga Aiyar next accused the Government of deliberately driving a wedge in the pan-Asiatic movement by sending Indian troops to shoot the Chinese. He would rather see Indian interests destroyed than use Indians to enslave the Chinese.

As the speaker had spoken for over an hour and some members from Government and European block had withdrawn into the lobby Mr. Doraiswami Iyengar interjected "Have the Europeans left bag and baggage." The European members thereafter soon walked in and Sir Darcy Lindsay moved closure of the debate. The President said no precedent existed of the closure being accepted in the middle of a speech and he would not like to create a bad precedent and even if all the honourable members were on one side and the speaker was alone, the chair would stand for the rights of the minority; but he hoped the speaker would not abuse the indulgence given to him.

Sir Alexander Muddiman, on a point of order, said that Standing Order 29 laid down that a member while speaking should not use the right of speech for the purpose of wilfully and persistently obstructing the business of the House. The speech of Mr. Ranga Aiyar had gone beyond the limits of reasonable discussion.

The President said so far he saw no reason to regard the speech as one made for the purpose of wilfully and persistently obstructing the business of the Assembly. He asked the Home Member to put himself into the shoes of Mr. Ranga Aiyar and consider whether he would not in the circumstances in which the honourable member was making a speech, make the same speech. The Home Member bowed to the chair and withdrew within 5 minutes, Government and European benches were left by others leaving hardly a dozen occupants.

Finally, Mr. Ranga Aiyar concluded just before 12 after having spoken both yesterday and to-day for two and a quarter hours.

Pandit MALAVIYA explained at length why he would not share the responsibility for supporting the Finance Bill which was based not on a real surplus but on indirect taxation. Was not Government extravagance indelibly written on the stones of Delhi? Had the Railway Board been Indianised? Then, as for military policy and expenditure, it was a sad tale. The Queen's Proclamation has not been put into effect and Indians were kept out of the army. There was no Sandhurst. Lord Macaulay's noble words had condemned the opium policy directed to render the people more amenable to the British control. As for the currency muddle, it was going to the life, heart and core of their national existence. Banks had not been established while the proposed reserve, by taking away control from the Assembly, would be of greater danger than of benefit. What they wanted was a State bank. People were not robust. Infant mortality was high. Companies were not flourishing. The Government of India annually brought up a Finance Bill for which the House had no responsibility.

Pandit Malaviya asked the Government whether Indians had been found wanting in any sphere that they had been tried in. If Indians had full power they would not plunge the country into war or expose her to danger, but would vote sufficient funds for the army. There was not only scope for reduction in military budget but also the Home Government should bear a greater portion of the Imperial

defence and the War Office should not continue to impose its will on the British Parliament.

Continuing. Pandit Malaviya said he appealed to the Englishmen to prove their friendship and fidelity. India had done it during the last war and if, according to Mr. Saunders and Mr. Wentworth Lewis another war was coming in ten years, there was greater reason for winning Indian people's good-will. He, however, warned against the forward policy. He finally appealed to the Indians to show the same sense of unity and discipline which had now been achieved by the British in their great Empire.

Sir Basil Blackett, replying, first announced that demands under Executive Council, Railway Board, and Army Department had been restored and that the cut of Rs. 11,000 made in the last item had been accepted. He asked Pandit Malaviya to read what the Brussels Conference had to say against a State Bank and for a Central Bank. He protested against the suggestion that the War Office imposed its will on India and on the British Parliament. As for Kathiawar ports, he gave an assurance to Bombay members that an urgent solution was being considered. Firstly, they wanted the present conditions not to continue. Secondly, they must ensure the fiscal interests of the Central Government and commercial interests of the various ports and the need for development of ports in India for the good of India. Sir Basil was about to argue against Pandit Malaviya's suggestion for throwing out the Finance Bill when Pandit Malaviya said he had merely stated he could not support the Bill.

#### FINANCE BILL PASSED

The motion for the passage of the Finance Bill as amended was put and carried by 66 to 29. Some Nationalists including Pandit Malaviya voted with the Congressmen and others remained neutral, while the Independents voted for the Bill.

#### GOLD STANDARD AND RESERVE BANK BILL

Sir Basil Blackett next moved reference to a Joint Committee of both Houses with a membership of 28 the Gold Standard and Reserve Bank Bill. Mr Jammadas Mchta's objection to reference to a Joint Committee was not accepted by the House. Sir Basil Blackett pointed out that they wanted all the best brains available to go into the Bill and the Imperial Bank Act Amendment Bill would also be submitted to the same Committee. The House adopted Sir Basil's motion.

#### SALARY OF INDIAN PRIVY COUNCILLORS.

Sir Alexander Muddiman then moved the Assembly to consider resolution which its predecessor had rejected with regard to providing Indian experience on the Privy Council and fixing India's contribution towards their salary. He had brought this resolution as he thought that its rejection by the last Assembly, had been criticised even in quarters not friendly to the Government. Secondly, the Council of State on the motion of a non-official member had accepted the proposed reform without division. This reform was very dear to his heart and was of great importance to India. To those who opposed it in order to break a link with the Empire, he had no words to address. But to those who wished to see a Supreme Court in India he would say that acceptance of his resolution did not stand in the way of their agitating for a Supreme Court. No doubt in course of time India might like to have her own Supreme Court; but it was not in sight yet—not even on the horizon. He would frankly tell the House that the question of a Supreme Court was certainly not likely to be decided in a hurry. Why not then accept this improvement which would benefit the country for a considerable period of years. He refused the suggestion that India in this matter was not as well treated as the Dominions and the Colonies. On the other hand the British Government by agreeing to increase by ten times their contribution was treating India better than any part of the Empire. Those who suggested that Indians should sit in the Privy Council must remember as to how many brilliant Indian lawyers except of course those Indians who had been anglicised would care to go to England on a salary of £8,000 per annum. If the House refused the share of India, there would be still lesser chance of getting any Indian to sit on the Privy Council with a salary of £4,000 per annum. The House had in this matter full responsibility and the Government would accept its verdict finally. By voting down the motion, they would make the British Government drop their legislation for additional contribution and would lose the opportunity of making the Privy Council into an unrivalled tribunal, at least for the present. (Applause),

## AN AMENDMENT

Mr. Aney moved an amendment to provide for the appointment of persons who are *bona fide* residents of India. He said that there was no dearth of capable Indians who would make good privy councillors. The amendment, if accepted, would enable them to accept the resolution.

Sir Hari Singh Gour stood for a Supreme Court in India and feared that the acceptance of the proposal would stand in the way of a Supreme Court in India for which the time was propitious, as the Statutory Commission was about to come to India. They must have a Supreme Court to uphold the constitution of the country. The House then adjourned.

## PRIVY COUNCILLORS' SALARY

Next day, the 25th MARCH, discussion was resumed on the Home Member's resolution moved yesterday regarding the Privy Council.

Mr. S. Srinivasa IYENGAR in opening the debate said that no case had been made out for this extraordinary proposition by the Home Member. Mr. Iyengar held that the British Exchequer alone should bear the cost. He did not understand why Indian experience was considered necessary for the Privy Council. Certain weighty sections in India had greater confidence in purely British judges who would be able to decide cases without bias imported from India. They were not sure they would get Indians or others of the right type. The Privy Council was intended more as a luxury for soweras and zamindars than as a necessity for the litigant public. He would have fees enhanced in such cases to discourage litigation and appeals. He fully associated himself with the demand for a Supreme Court.

Mr. Allison considered the resolution to be conceived in the best interest of India. Men of first rate ability and full vigour should go into these places. Mr. Aney's amendment was unnecessary since if able Indians accepted the offer, these appointments should go to them.

## MR NEOGY'S AMENDMENT

Mr. NEOGY moved another amendment which purported to pay no salary from the Indian revenue, but would allow an allowance of two thousand pounds per annum in case the person appointed to the Privy Council has an Indian domicile. This would be in addition to the salary as paid from the British Exchequer. This bore analogy to overseas pay. Sir Sankaran Nair had special qualification to speak on the subject and he had stated that so long as Hindu and Muslim laws were not codified, there must be Hindu and Muslim judges.

Mr. Nirmul CHUNDER said that the Privy Council was entirely a British institution on which they could not confer jurisdiction. Now that the Secretary of State's expenses had after considerable agitation been transferred to British revenue, the House would be stultifying itself by agreeing to bear a part of the expenses.

Mr. G. P. SINHA wondered why the Home Member was anxious to improve the Privy Council when he had failed to separate the judicial from the executive function. He quoted to his support the opinion of Sir Abdur Rahim. The speaker complained of political bias in the Privy Council decisions at times.

Mr. JAYAKAR said the Home Member had made the egregious mistake of confining his opponents to three categories. The speaker belonged to a fourth. He did not believe the time was ripe for a Supreme Court in India; but his view which might look novel was that the experiment of importing Indian experience into the Privy Council as a result of the Act of 1833 had not been successful. But hitherto the fact that this place did not carry a salary had not converted it into a job. He would tell frankly that his profession in Bombay really attached weight to the judgment of British judges who were appointed to the High Court. This resolution exaggerated the importance of Indian experience. He held that on the whole the Privy Council decisions had not been unsound and political prejudice complained of was due entirely to the element of Indian experience that had been imported to the Privy Council. After all, why did they want Indian experience, especially when no Indian of requisite ability would be forthcoming to spend years in London? Indian law was the most distant and even a defective imitation and reflection of the English law. Did Mr. Allison believe that men possessing first rate ability and full vigour of mind would be those who were retiring after full service in India? The speaker's view was that they would be

voting for jobbery by fixing a salary which would make these posts jobs which the third and fourth rate men, the more unscrupulous, the more scheming and designing men would accept to continue the process of money-making in retirement.

Sir Alexander MUDDIMAN, in replying to the debate, wished the House discussed all subjects as frankly and with such absence of prejudice as his resolution had brought fourth. He was surprised to hear the argument against multiplicity of courts from Mr. Simivasu Iyengar as every attempt the Government made to reduce appeals was opposed by members opposite and he was surprised to hear the argument from one who had been a member of the legal profession with honour and profit and owed all he had made to the practice in courts. Mr. Jayakar's speech was the most interesting, but he repudiated most strongly that there was any jobbery and asked whether any one denied whether a succession of judges of Indian experience, judges like Mr. Peacock Wilson and others, had not brought to the Privy Council strength rather than weakness. (Applause.) Could any one deny that the influence of the Privy Council continued to be the most valuable in regard to the administration of law in this country? (Applause) And here was an opportunity not for jobbery but for improving the machinery still further by providing reasonable remuneration to attract the best men. Mr. Allison had, in a remarkable speech, answered those who stood for a Supreme Court. The Home Member would have considered Mr. Neogy's amendment seriously; but it was impossible as it would mean that those appointed with Indian domicile would get £2,200 after deducting pension and those without Indian domicile £3,800. Here was an opportunity to strengthen the Privy Council for the benefit of the people of this country.

#### RESOLUTION CARRIED

Mr. Auey withdrew his amendment in favour of Mr. Neogy's; but Mr. Neogy wished to amend his resolution in the light of the Home Member's criticism, but was not allowed. He also withdrew his amendment and the original resolution of the Home Member which the last Assembly had rejected was to-day carried by 50 votes against 49 amidst official applause.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS

The House then voted six supplementary demands for grants moved by Mr. Parsons, Railway Financial Commissioner, without discussion except on the question of location of a clearing accounts office. Mr. Parsons said it was almost certain that both on grounds of efficiency and economy it would be located at Delhi. They were locating the new division headquarters at Lucknow and were doing everything possible to bring back to Lucknow those who had been transferred to Calcutta.

#### OFFICIAL BILLS

Sir B. N. Mitra introduced a Bill amending the Mines Act with a view to introduce compulsory shift system which already prevailed in some mines. The Bill was circulated for opinion.

On the motion of Sir Charles Innes, the House concurred in the recommendation of the Council of State to refer the Bill consolidating and amending the law relating to provision, maintenance and control of lighthouse by the Government to a joint committee of both Houses.

The Secretary announced that the Council of State had agreed to the Currency Bill as passed by the Assembly. Some members in the Congress benches cried 'shame'. The House then adjourned.

On the 26th MARCH the Assembly met to consider a large number of pending Bills, both those which have already been passed by the Upper House and await concurrence of the Assembly, and those which await introduction. Among the latter were included Bills amending the Divorce Act and the Bar Council Act.

#### COMMITTEE ON RESERVE BANK BILL

On the motion of Sir Basil Blackett, the Assembly agreed to the appointment of the following from the Assembly to sit on the Joint Committee on Bills relating to the Reserve Bank and the amendment of the Imperial Bank Act: Sir Basil Blackett, Sir Purshottandas, Mr. S. Chetti, Mr. Jannadas Mehta, Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, Mr. Kelkar, Pandit Malaviya, Mr. Fazil Rahimtullah, Raja Gazanfarali Khan, Mr. Ariff, Mr. Cooke, Sir Victor Sassoon, Mr. Kikabhal Premchand and Mr. Iyengar.

Mr. Jannadas Mehta suggested that there should be a preliminary sitting of the committee on Monday. Sir Basil said he would try to arrange it.

Mr. Aravamuda Iyengar, Financial Under-Secretary, then moved the Assembly to agree to the Bill amending the Madras Salt Act as passed by the Council of State.

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar moved an amendment which was supported by Mr. Duraiswami Iyengar and Mr. Nilkanthadas for the purpose of ensuring that the proposed Bill did raise the existing tax.

The amendments were negatived and the Bill passed without change. The Assembly also passed on the motion of Mr. Bhore the Bill amending the Provident Fund Act as passed by the Council of State.

#### VOLUNTARY POLICE

The Home Member next introduced an important Bill in the Assembly to constitute a volunteer police. The Bill, he said, while encouraging the growth of the civic sense, would provide material assistance to the authorities in the preservation of law and order. The appointments will be honorary except for out of pocket expenses and compensations for illness or injury. The duties of the force will not include investigation or prosecution and it will have the rights, privileges and protection granted by the Police Act in the discharge of Police duties. The force will have both rank and file and officers, but will be under the direction and control of the Police Superintendent. Such a force may be raised by the District Magistrate for use in the district under the general and special control of the local Government concerned. Similar action can be taken in the Presidency towns.

#### FOREST AMENDMENT BILL

Sir Hari Singh Gour moved that the Bill to consolidate the law relating to the transit of forest produce and duty leviable on timber and other forest produce as passed by the Council of State be taken into consideration. He said that it was merely a consolidating measure and was the outcome of the labours of the Statutory Law Revisions Committee.

Mr. Doraiswami Iyengar's motion to circulate the Bill having been ruled out of order by the Deputy President he moved that it be referred to a Select Committee. He complained that the operation of the Forest Act caused great hardship to labourers and agriculturists.

Mr. Aney strongly supported him holding the view that the Bill was not only a consolidation measure, but that a number of sections had been omitted by the Statutory Revision Committee who had not apparently studied the subject fully. For instance, under Section 34 of the present Act, it was incumbent on the local Government to enquire into the rights of private persons before declaring a piece of land as Forest area and if the section was omitted as proposed in the Bill the rights of many individuals would be annihilated.

Sir Alexander Muddiman, replying, said the Law Revision Committee did not merely put acts together but cut off any section which had ceased to operate or to be useful. The question of substance underlying the Bill could not be raised.

The House divided and carried by 51 to 46 Mr. Doraiswami Iyengar's motion for a Select Committee.

Mr. Doraiswami Iyengar thereupon put forward the names to constitute the committee but some Independents challenged the motion which was passed by 37 to 24.

The President remarked that the Chairman of the Select Committee would do well to keep in view that as this was a consolidating Bill no amendment other than that of a formal and drafting nature would be in order. (Laughter.) He then adjourned the House.

#### DISCUSSION ON SALT TAX

On the 28th MARCH the Secretary of the Assembly read a communication from the Council of State regarding the Salt Tax which the Congress and Nationalist benches received with cries of shame.

Sir Basil BLACKETT then moved the House to accept the amendment of the Council of State restoring the Salt tax to Rs. 1-4 per maund. The choice before the House he said was whether the Central taxpayer be relieved or provincial taxpayer be benefitted. If they chose the former course they would be accused by the provinces of breach of faith. He made it clear that the Government were not prepared to adopt rash expedients such as the reduction of sinking fund or other cheap ways to popularity (Laughter and some ironical 'Hear hear.') at the expense of the Indian taxpayer

to give up provincial contributions as well as Salt Tax this year. (Official applause.) The reduction of Salt Tax to ten annas would leave with them 141 lakhs surplus only of which eighty lakhs was non-recurring which meant that only a portion of provincial contributions would be remitted and with the loss of permanent revenue of 312 lakhs in respect of Salt Tax they might have to ask even the Bengal Government to pay its contributions next year. (Laughter.) Then again some Governments, particularly the Bombay Government would be immediately faced with the prospect of additional taxation. These contributions were hampering both provincial and Central Government. Let them make a final effort to get rid of them. The House would be laying a strong foundation for future successful finance if it endorsed the Government recommendation for the acceptance of the Council of State's amendment. (Applause.)

Pandit Motilal NEHRU opposed the motion of the Finance Member in the Assembly to-day. Though he was conscious of the poor chance of success he opposed it in order to put on record once again the utter hollowness of the constitution. The House was being asked to go back upon its previous decision and say ditto to, or rather submissively register, the decree passed by that August House, (Ironical laughter), the Council of State, in its wisdom. It was wrong to impose a tax on an indispensable article of food, it was wicked to continue to levy it over a succession of years and now it was criminal to insist on a higher rate being realised from a famished people whose representatives in their helplessness felt themselves justified in agreeing to the lower rate of As. 10; but as they were the crippled representatives of a paralysed people, the Government were bent on its pound of flesh. The argument that the bond gave no jot of blood would not avail for the simple reason that there were other instruments in the hands of the Government which could draw blood as well as flesh. They, therefore, contented themselves with pleading for the half pound but the Council of Elders decided otherwise. It was a House where there was a nominal elected majority but really the plain ordinary men were only 21 because the rest were either officials or nominated members or those elected members who belonged to European constituencies or jewelled men or those with titles from G.C.I.E., to Khan Bahadur or those who were aspirants for honours. Of course there were a few honourable exceptions among them but the fact was that there were only 21 men who were plain and ordinary. A House so constituted had undone the work of the Assembly which was being asked to eat the humble pie. It was a form of penalised extortion they were subjected to under the constitution. This was how the Assembly was being asked to exercise its opportunities of showing their powers and Lord Birkenhead was taking his own time to assure himself as to whether the Reforms have been or are likely to be a success or a failure. This Assembly had shown enough co-operation since the commencement of this session. Who could deny this fact and what was the reply of Lord Birkenhead? "India may perhaps get something which is real and something which is more permanent." So on Lord Birkenhead's own showing India had nothing approaching a real constitution. This would be an eye-opener to those who were looking forward to the early appointment of the Statutory Commission and what they might expect from it. India was tied hand and foot to this constitution and given spoon feeding at the hands of those who guarded them and Lord Birkenhead asked, "What will you Indians do if we Britishers leave India?" That is the cruel irony of the situation. The Assembly asked for the release of Mr. S. C. Mitra who was unjustly detained. Then in regard to sending troops to China without consulting the Legislature they were gagged by the Executive. The Bengal Detenus were offered only a changed form of imprisonment. There was a vote of censure on the Railway Board and the Executive Council and then a stiff fight over the Currency Bill. They knew the result. The crowning act was now in the treatment accorded to the Assembly which was being asked to submit to legalised extortion. Was this House going to be dictated to by the Council of State which had no power in case of the money Bill? The honour of the Assembly was at stake and he asked those who voted last time for reduction to stick to their view and those who voted against reduction to uphold the honour and dignity of the House and not to be misled by Sir Basil's threat of remission of Provincial Contributions, because they all held that it was possible not only to reduce the Salt Tax but also remit the Provincial contributions. (Loud cheers.) Mr. Aney recalled how the House of Commons threw over the Money Bill amended by the House of Lords. But in kicking this Bill out of the House the Assembly would not be uncivil (laughter) but would civilly reject it.

Mr. Doraiswami Iyengar said reduction in duties on motor cars and tea helped the rich and the only action the Assembly took for the sake of the poor was being challenged by the Government. According to him 167 lakhs worth of Salt Tax was paid by Madras in a year and the remission gave them 165 lakhs only. Madras would be a loser by two lakhs. He repudiated the suggestion that Madras members previously supported Salt Tax because they were opposed to a Non-Brahmin Ministry. Had Mr. Murtza and Mr. Chetti become Brahmins after coming to Delhi? (Laughter).

Sir George Paddison warned that the Madras Government's policy of introducing compulsory education, repairing and building roads would be suspended and the depressed class people would be most disappointed. The House would be showing strength rather than weakness by reversing its decision and showing that it really wished to stand by the poor (Applause).

Mr. Acharya wanted to know what proportion of this remission would go to the Transferred Departments.

Mr. Abdul Aziz reminded the House lest they should forget that the Punjab was as vitally interested in remission of contributions as Madras and Bombay.

Raja Ghaznafarali felt that no way had been shown for remitting contributions as well as reducing Salt Tax.

Mr. Mahomed Yakub deprecated the attacks on the Upper House. He would choose the lesser of the two evils by voting for the Salt Duty. Village life would remain unaffected by reduction in Salt Duty, but remission of contributions would go far to improve their lot through education and sanitation.

Mr. K. C. Neogy twitted those members who spoke on the ratio question as pleading for the masses but who were now absent. Referring to Sir Basil's threat of a possible revival of the imposition of Provincial Contribution from Bengal if the Salt Duty was not restored to one and four, Mr. Neogy said the case of Bengal was entirely different. It was granted remission even in the deficit year of 1921. The Finance Member could not go back on the Joint Parliamentary Committee's recommendation.

Sir Basil retorted that if the Salt Tax was reduced a new situation would be created which would have to be considered. The best thing for Mr. Neogy to safeguard the provincial interests would be to vote with the Government.

Mr. Neogy said they could sit round a table to discuss where to find money from in lieu of Salt Tax reduction and as to whether they should raise a sinking fund.

Mr. Cocke said as most of the Bombay members were absent he was anxious to put in a strong plea for his presidency. He denied that supporters of reduction would really benefit the poor and that those who opposed it were against the interests of the poor.

Sir Basil Blackett said Mr. Yakub had put the case very squarely. They must vote for what was best for the benefit of the country. He did not accept the compliment that he was such a clever financier that he could produce another rabbit out of his hat. (Laughter). He could say that 1s. 4d. ratio in this case was the natural ratio. (Laughter). It existed before the Reforms and was raised to 2s. 8d. only for a year. "If I were superstitious and finding that 1s. 4d. has been so unlucky this session then I may be nervous about the result. But I will finally appeal to the House to help the Governments of the provinces to get rid of their contributions and start a new era that we hope will dawn with the next year. Then the Finance Member will cease from worrying you with dilemmas and the provinces will be at rest. (Applause).

The House then accepted the closure and the motion to take the Council of State's amendment into consideration was put and carried by 52 against 41.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta then wanted to reopen the question by discussing how the debt redemption scheme could come to their help. About 10 minutes were spent in discussing the point and finally the President ruled that, while the House had in principle accepted merely to reverse its own vote in favour of As. 10 and that it was open for them to consider which other rate be substituted, it would not be desirable at this stage to traverse the same ground. He therefore put to vote the amendment in favour of restoring the salt tax to 1s. 4d. per maund and the House accepted it without division.

The Assembly next agreed to a supplementary demand of 2 crores and 52 lakhs representing this year's surplus to be used in the manner indicated by the Finance Member's speech.



## THE BENGAL TENANCY BILL

Legislative business was then taken into consideration. Sir Alexander Muddiman asked the House to pass the Bengal Tenancy Bill as passed by the Council of State.

Mr. Amarnath Dutt wanted it to be adjourned *sine die*.

Mr. Neogy suggested consultation of Bengal and Bihar Councils.

Messrs. Gayaprasad Singh and Sarfraz Hussain Khan from Bihar supported Mr. Neogy's plea.

The Home Member agreed to have the consideration adjourned till the Simla Session and in the meantime to consult the local bodies concerned.

## OFFICIAL BILLS

The House passed without discussion the bill amending the Presidency Towns and Provincial Insolvency Acts and also gave the Home Member leave to introduce four new bills:—(1) Amending the Civil Procedure Code, Section 96 to give effect to the Rankin Committee's proposal in this connection. (2) Amending the Divorce Act to provide for the appointment of an officer to exercise in India duties of the King's Proctor. (3) Amending the Bar Council's Act to give effect mostly to the recommendations of the Bar Committee Paragraph 21 for regulating seniority and pre-audience among the Advocates. (4) A bill to constitute a temporary volunteer police force for local service. The Home Member characterised this as a moderate reform; but it would be a valuable adjunct to the regular police force as was the impression he gathered during the general strike in England. The House passed the bill amending the Sea Customs Act as passed by the Council of State. The question of election of departmental standing committees was held over till the next session. Sir Hari Singh Gour was allowed to introduce the Age of Consent Bill.

The House was then *adjourned sine die* amidst cheers from all quarters at the end of their strenuous labours. It may be well to record that 43 sittings of the Assembly have taken place this session, that 35 divisions took place of which Government won 19 and lost 16, the total votes cast for the Government being 1,831 as against 1776.

## THE AUTUMN SESSION

SIMLA—18th AUGUST 1927

The first autumn session of the third Legislative Assembly opened at Simla on the 18th August with the hon. Mr. Patel in the chair. The agenda was fairly heavy. Besides an hour spent on questions and the consideration of a motion of adjournment moved by Mr. K. C. Roy on the subject of the East African Federation, there were various motions made for elections to standing committees. The other business included the presentation of the voluminous report with the dissenting minutes on the Reserve Bank Bill, the introduction of three Tariff Bills, reference to a select committee of the Volunteer Police Force Bill and the final disposal of the Bar Councils Bill and the Merchant Shipping (Haj pilgrimage) Bill.

The adjournment motion of Mr. K. C. Roy which was discussed in the afternoon was the one which the Government could not oppose without openly confessing that it was a subordinate branch of the British administration. It urged the need for adequate Indian representation on the forthcoming enquiry by a special commission on East Africa. Earlier in the day Sir Basil Blackett had initiated himself as the leader of the House by opposing this motion of adjournment on the ground that it was not a matter of urgent importance for the Government of India and already made full representation on the subject. But the bubble was pricked when the President put a crucial question: 'Had the Government urged adequate 'Indian' representation?' Sir Basil faltered and replied that they had urged the representation of 'Indian interests'.

The debate in the afternoon brought out facts which Mr. Roy as a member of the Colonies Committee was singularly fitted to disclose and he proved that all

talks of safeguarding Indian interests was sheer hypocrisy. Pandit Kunzru, Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar and Dr. Gour strongly supported the plea for the grant of the full right of Indians in sharing in the trusteeship if it was to devolve on the immigrant communities of whom Indians historically, numerically and commercially, had a supreme claim. Sir Muhammed Habibulla in vain tried to build a convenient theory on some eye-wash of phrases found in the recent White Paper. His reply was naturally dubbed by Mr. Roy as disappointing and when the motion of censure was put Sir Muhammad contented with declaring 'no' but did not challenge a division.

Of the other business outside the order paper, the resolution on the Gujarat, Orissa and Sind floods was timely giving expression to the intense feeling of sympathy roused by the floods throughout the country. It was happy too that the Viceroy had made a personal donation of Rs. 500 and Mr. Patel's announcement of this gave a special significance to the adoption of the resolution.

## Gold Standard and Reserve Bank Bill.

### SELECT COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Sir Basil Blackett then presented the report of the joint committee on the Gold Standard and Reserve Bank Bill, together with the minutes of dissent. At the outset all were agreed that the Bill, as redrafted, reflected a substantial measure of agreement on a large number of important points. Sharp difference of opinion existed on the question as to whether the Reserve Bank should be a purely State bank without share capital or one with private share capital, and also on the question of constitution of the directorate.

Regarding the former question, the majority view, embodied in the main report and accordingly incorporated in the revised Bill, was in favour of a purely State bank, because in their opinion a private shareholders' bank would tend to be controlled by vested interests and would, therefore, fail to secure the confidence of the Indian public, and its utility to the public might even be enlarged by a conflict of interests within the management of the bank between the Indian and external capital.

### OFFICIAL VIEW.

The minority view, which in sense might be said to represent the official view, held fast to the scheme of a private share capital bank, for in the absence of a body of shareholders, to whom the directorate can be answerable and for whose privately subscribed capital it was responsible the anomaly arose that the board of directors, once constituted, was theoretically responsible to no one either for the capital subscribed by the Government or for the large funds which come under its control from Government and the public. 'We are willing to consider the possibility of tolerating this anomaly', argues the minority, 'if we could be convinced that a suitable electorate could be framed for the selection of a majority of directors (it being essential that the majority should not owe their place to Government nomination) without recourse to the device of private shareholders and that a suitable directorate could be thus created independent of Government and the Legislature and likely to work well in practice.'

All efforts to secure this having failed, the minority was convinced that a private share capital bank was the best method and, therefore, recommended alteration of the Bill to something nearer to its original form, providing for share capital and for the election of at least a considerable proportion of directors by shareholders. The minority considered it possible to adapt to a shareholders' bank some of the ideas included in the revised Bill, *e. g.*, election of one director each by the provincial co-operative banks, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and the Associated Chambers of Commerce, respectively. The minority was prepared to entrust to similar electorates the duty of electing, in the first instance, those of the directors who will thereafter be subject to election by shareholders. The minority believed that by such means and by providing that at the time of the original subscription of share capital, preference in allotment shall be given to small subscribers and to persons of Indian domicile, all objections felt by the majority to a share capital bank could be overcome.

### COMPOSITION OF DIRECTORATE.

As regards the composition of the directorate, the majority had provided in the

Bill for a board consisting of 15 governors and one officer, the scheme ensuring a majority upon the board of Indian elected members, including three to be elected by the elected members of the central legislature and another three by the elected members of provincial legislatures. The scheme, it was further explained, provided for either the governor or the deputy governor to be an Indian and that, two directors who were also to be nominated by the Governor-General in Council should be Indians.

#### INTRUDING RACIAL AND COMMUNAL CONSIDERATIONS.

The minority strongly opposed to this scheme, because it was incompatible with the fundamental principle, which was not disputedly the majority, that the directorate should be entirely free to carry out its important functions of control of currency and credit policy solely on lines of prudent finance and must, therefore, be released from control by Government and the legislature as well as be free from the risk of political pressure and from the appearance of being subject to such risk. The minority found no great difficulty in finding right men to serve as directors outside the ranks of members of legislatures. The minority regarded the majority scheme in this respect as providing for 11 out of 15 owing their presence on the board to state intervention. The proposal also offended against the principle that the constitutional functions of the legislature ought not to extend to the exercise of executive functions, such as appointment of persons to specific posts. The provision that the governor or the deputy governor should always be an Indian, was regarded by the minority as intruding racial and communal questions in a sphere where they ought not to belong, but the minority was agreeable that in the case of directors to be nominated by Government, selection should be made with a view to making the board as widely representative as possible of the various localities, communities and interests of India as a whole.

#### GOLD SECURITIES IN RESERVE.

Other Points of difference arose in regard to the amount of gold securities in reserve and the question of introduction of gold *mohurs*. As regards the former, the majority opined that after 10 years at least one-half of the reserve should consist of gold coin or gold bullion, the object being to ensure that free flow of gold into India should not be checked by any tendency on the part of the bank to substitute gold securities for coin or bullion. The minority considered this proposal as one that might unduly hamper the executive of the bank and preferred the provision that gold bullion must never be less than one-quarter of the reserve.

#### INTRODUCTION OF GOLD MOHURS.

On the latter question, the minority was opposed to the majority proposal to restore sovereign and half-sovereign as legal tender and for reasons explained in Sir Basil Blackett's memorandum was further opposed to coin gold *mohurs* and to express notes in terms of *mohurs* as well as rupees. The minority said it was aware that the majority realised that effective circulation of gold *mohur* was impossible. Moreover, it added, inclusion of any reference to gold *mohur* might arouse false expectations and lead to continued pressure upon Government to coin *mohurs* and put them into circulation in a way that could only result in making it impossible to maintain the stability of exchange in relation to gold altogether.

#### MINUTES OF DISSENT.

The minority note was signed by Sir Basil Blackett, Mr. Mc Watters, Mr. Cocke, Mr. V. K. A. Iyengar, Mr. Brayne, Sardar Charanjit Singh, Sir Umar Hayat Khan and Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan. The essential points of this note were supported in separate minutes, but for almost identical reasons, by Sir John Bell, Mr. Suhrawardy and Mr. Kikabhai Premchand.

But Sir John Bell made it clear in his individual capacity that he still perferred utilisation of the machinery of the Imperial Bank for the functions of a reserve bank, thereby obviating the necessity for compensating the Imperial Bank at the expense of other banks in the country and also preventing the introduction of a factor in the establishment of the Reserve bank which will expose the indigenous banks to competition with a State-aided bank and adversely affect their prosperity.

Sir Umar Hayat Khan and Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan pleaded for adequate representation of Muslims, zeminders and agricultural interests.

Seth Govindas and Mr. Jambadas Mehta regarded the agreement with the Im-

perial Bank to be unduly generous and they were opposed to investing the assets of the Reserve Bank in any gold standard countries except England and the United States, as the possibilities of maintaining a free gold market in the two above mentioned countries are always greater.

Sir John Bell thought that the Reserve Bank should not be allowed to purchase bills of exchange having a currency of 90 days, as this involved commercial risk which it should not undertake.

Both Sir John Bell and Mr. Kelkar opined that the amount of balances which scheduled bank was to maintain with the Reserve Bank (free of interest) was too large and imposed an unnecessarily large handicap upon the indigenous banks.

#### POINTS OF AGREEMENT.

On all other provisions of the Bill, as revised, there was perfect agreement among the members. The committee as a whole had limited the extent to which the Reserve Bank could borrow in India, because otherwise it would be competing with other banks for fixed deposits. Indeed it laid down in another clause that the bank should not enter into indiscriminate competition with commercial banks. Government was asked to be extremely cautious as to the time and amounts in which surplus silver should be offered for sale and the committee had increased by 25 crores each of the limits of the amounts of rupee coin which might be held at various periods in the reserve.

On the 22nd AUGUST the Assembly reassembled to elect various members for panels for standing committees and to refer the Bill to safeguard manufacture of yarn of Sir George Rainy to select committee.

#### ACTION ON RESOLUTIONS OF THE DELHI SESSION.

Mr. W. T. M. Wright made a statement showing the action taken by the Government of India on the various resolutions adopted by the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly during the last Delhi session.

Out of 17 resolutions about ten had been referred to the Secretary of State or the local Governments concerned for their opinion or action; three were still under consideration; one was given effect to in full and only one was considered to be such whereby no useful purpose would be served if given effect to.

In the case of Mr. Mahmood Suhrawardy's resolution recommending the appointment of a committee to examine the desirability of developing the road system of India, the Government of India considered that it would be desirable that a conference of representatives of local Governments should meet to discuss the question of road development generally and in particular matters which should be placed before the committee which was to be appointed, including members of both Houses. It was proposed to hold a conference at the end of September, 1927, on a date which would be convenient to the majority of the local Governments.

The Hon. Mr. Ramdas Pantulu's resolution recommending moderation in the use of alcoholic liquors in the local administrations under the direct control of the Government of India is considered merely as reaffirming the existing policy of the Government of India. Government are, however, making enquiries as to the rate of consumption in the local administrations of Coorg, Ajmer-Merwara and Bulchistan with a view to see whether any action was called for in order to promote moderation.

No useful purpose, it is considered, would be served by giving effect to the hon. Mr. P. C. D. Chari's resolution recommending an enquiry into the Indian Income-tax Act by a committee.

Regarding the utilization of interest on deposits in the postal savings bank and Government securities belonging to Muslims, suggested by Sir Ebrahim Jaffer, the Government have decided to confine themselves to an announcement that they are willing to facilitate payment into special funds having the support of a representative Muslim body of the interest earned by such Muslim depositors who do not wish to claim it. The first step was, therefore, for Muslims to make arrangements for the establishment of such a fund.

With regard to the hon. Mr. Ramdas Pantulu's resolution recommending the reduction of agricultural indebtedness and the establishment of land mortgage banks copies of the debates were sent to the local Governments for information and such action as they deemed necessary. Another resolution of his suggesting the provision of compulsory military training for college students in Indian universities

was under consideration. The local Governments and administrations have been approached.

On Sir Ebrahim Jaffer's resolution demanding provision of tuberculosis hospitals, sanatoria, etc., for training practitioners in the treatment of this disease and the control of the craze for medical drugs, and the hon. Mr. A. Sinha's resolution regarding the amendment of the Indian Forest Act of 1878, Sir Phiroze Sethna's resolution for the appointment of an Indian to be the leader of the Indian delegation to the League of Nations, Mr. Jogiah's resolution regarding the release of political detenus, Mr. Gangananda Sinha's resolution regarding the treatment of Santhal Paraganas as a back-ward tract and Sir Alexander Muddiman's resolution regarding the enhancement of the salary of two members of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council were referred to the Secretary of State.

The hon. Mr. Ramdas Pantulu's resolution regarding the daily allowance of members of the Council of State and the Assembly was given effect to as adopted. While his resolution regarding censorship and control over cinemas and other public resorts of amusement and the hon. Lala Ramsaran Das's resolution regarding the assignment of a suitable place in the warrant of precedence to members of the Indian and provincial Legislatures were under consideration.

#### BENGAL DETENUS.

Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh drew attention of the Government to the recent speech by Earl Winterton in the House of Commons regarding Bengal detenus and the statement made by Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose in a Calcutta paper in which the latter denied ever having been tried by any magistrate, judge or judges or ever having been told that papers in connection with his case which had been prepared or fabricated had been examined either prior to his arrest or would be examined subsequent to his arrest, etc. Mr. Singh also referred to Mr. Bose's remarks in the same statement, in which he said that his predicament was the result of personal malice against him on the part of a high police official. In view of the nature of this charge, Mr. Singh enquired whether the Government proposed to call upon Mr. Bose either to prove the charge or withdraw it.

Mr. J. Crerar, replying, said that he had seen the statement made by Mr. Bose. The report of Lord Winterton's remarks which Mr. Bose quoted was not entirely accurate and since then a further statement on the subject had been made in the House of Commons which prevented any possibility of misunderstanding. Mr. Crerar replied last to the query to call upon Mr. Bose to prove the charge, etc., in the negative.

Diwan Chaman Lal in a supplementary question wanted to have the remarks made by Lord Winterton.

Mr. Crerar said they would be found in the report of the speech in *Hansard*, a copy of which could be seen in the library.

*Diwan Chaman Lal.*—Wherein does the hon. member consider those remarks to be inaccurate?

*Mr. Crerar.*—I think if the hon. member will be good enough to read the version of the statement contained in the question and compare it closely with that which appears in the official report, he will see that the reproduction is not entirely accurate.

*Mr. Goswami.*—Is it not a fact that the subsequent statement of Earl Winterton was in the nature of whitewashing his previous statement?

*Mr. Crerar.*—I do not think that can be fairly suggested. It appears to me that the noble lord had made a somewhat inaccurate statement in his first statement and he then quite honestly and candidly corrected it in his second statement.

*Mr. Goswami.*—Has the hon. Member any doubt that the noble Earl made an inaccurate statement on the subject of liberty of these detenus? Has the hon. member any doubt that whatever statement the noble Earl made was inaccurate?

*Mr. Crerar.*—I am not prepared to say that every statement made by the noble lord was inaccurate.

*Mr. K. Ahmad.*—In view of the fact that Lord Winterton has committed a gross blunder...

*President.*—Order. order.

Mr. K. C. Neogy then asked: Sir, I have a question to ask. Is it not a fact that in making such statements on important subjects to the House of Commons, the Under-Secretary of State or the Secretary of State generally depends upon what information is supplied by the Government of India?

*Mr. Crerar.*—If the hon. gentleman suggests that any inaccuracy that might have been in the noble lord's statement was based on some statement communicated by the Government of India, I am in a position to assure him that that is not the case.

*Mr. Goswami.*—May I point out to the Home Member that the inaccuracy here is a serious one and it almost appears as if the noble Earl was deliberately misleading the House of Commons ?

*Mr. Crerar.*—I think, Sir, the House will generally agree that if the noble lord took the earliest possible opportunity of correcting an admitted inaccuracy on one point, the matter might be allowed to go at that.

#### BILL TO SAFEGUARD MANUFACTURE OF YARN

Sir George Rainy then moved that the Bill to Safeguard the Manufacture of Cotton Yarn be referred to a select committee consisting of Maulvi Yakub, Mr. Shanmukham Chetty, Sir Victor Sasson, Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas, Mr. Lamb, Dr. Suhrawardy, Dewan Chaman Lal, Mr. Joshi, Raja Ghazanfar Ali, Mr. Duraiswami Iyengar, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, Mr. S. C. Mitra, Mr. Kunzru, Munshi Iswar Saran, Mr. Jayakar and Sir George Rainy, for report by August 31.

The Commerce Member spoke for nearly an hour, explaining the reasons which led the Government to adopt the line they did. He admitted that the Japanese mills by adopting double shift working and employing women had the advantage of having their overhead charges. But the fact that Japan had not ratified the Washington Convention in regard to labour was not a legitimate ground of complaint against the Indian Government.

The Government had, however, accepted the finding that night work in Japanese mills enabled them to reduce the selling price by 16 pice per pound in the case of yarn, and, therefore, the Government accepted the finding that competition in this case was unfair. The low price, said the Tariff Board, not only kept down the prices of Indian yarn of same counts but of all counts, especially of those below 30 counts.

As regards counts higher than 30, the competition was indirect. If, however, the price of medium counts were raised by raising the import duty, the probable result would be the transfer of an appreciable burden on Indian spindles, forcing them to the production of medium counts, and the consequent diminution of internal competition. The adoption of the Noyce report for protection against Japan alone would have involved denunciation of the trade agreement under which the parties were entitled to the most favoured nation treatment. Moreover, a step of that kind would be fraught with serious economic and political consequences. It would have led to retaliatory measures. Hence the Government decision against the Noyce recommendation for differential duty against Japan. The bounty scheme proposed would lead to administrative expenses and difficulties. A specific duty of 1 half annas per pound on cotton yarn or 5 per cent. *ad valorem* was the safest method of safeguarding the manufacture of cotton yarn. This decision was arrived at after a prolonged consideration of all factors and the Government believed that its prejudicial effect on hadloom industry would not be serious.

The motion for a select committee was then put and carried and the House rose for the day.

#### INDIAN CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT.

On the 23rd AUGUST further consideration was taken up of Sir Hari Singh Gour's motion of Feb. 15 to repeal and amend the provisions of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act., 1908, and the Criminal Procedure Code, 1898. The object of Dr. Gour, as he said, was not the entire repeal of Part II of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, but only section 15, sub-clause (b) of clause 2 thereof. The Bill gave the High Court jurisdiction, as in all criminal matters, to revise the action of the executive in declaring an association unlawful and gave the right of appeal to an aggrieved person. The second part of the bill is to extend the provisions of the Habeas Corpus Act to British subjects.

*Mr. CRERAR*, Home Member, opposed the Bill. He referred to the inaccurate representation of the case by Dr. Gour on a previous occasion. The bill itself had been framed on an old Act which had been revised in certain respects. The Home Member quoted extensively from the Repressive Laws Committee's report to show that the committee itself did not want to repeal the second part of the Criminal

Law Amendment Act and that the question of repeal should be deferred for some time.

*Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar.*—How long ago was it?

Mr. Crerar, proceeding, alluded to several occurrences of disorders beginning with the Malabar rebellion and including Chauri Chaura, the Rae Bareilly riots, the Babbar Akali conspiracy, the Cawnpore conspiracy and ending with the Kakori conspiracy case. The occurrences were thus widespread, and events like the Malabar rebellion would not have been averted but for this law. But for the provision of this law, the Government would not have been able to restore order in several cases except with the application of even more drastic legislation. The Kakori conspiracy case, which concluded only yesterday, proved the existence of one or more associations of a dangerous character. Dr. Gour had ignored all this and now demanded what in effect amounted to the repeal of the entire Part II of the Criminal Law Amendment Act. Could any member prove any abuse of this law at any time? Past history proved the necessity for the measure and even in Ireland they had passed a law enabling the executive to declare certain associations as unlawful and persons convicted under it were liable to five years' penal servitude.

Regarding the extension of the provisions of the Habeas Corpus Act, the Home Member said that this was a separate issue. Concluding, Mr. Crerar said that if the Government were to be held responsible for the maintenance of law and order, the Legislature was not justified in taking away from it the powers which had been found very valuable in preserving law and order.

Sir Hari Singh GOUR admitted that his Bill was drafted on the old Act, but verbal amendments could be moved to rectify that error. The Bill was a very diluted measure. It was necessary to give power to the High Courts to enquire into the legality or sufficiency of the orders passed by the executive, and, in the words of Sir Lawrence Jenkins, High Courts should not be merely sentencing courts. When there was no such power given to the High Courts now, it was no wonder that abuse of the law had not been brought to light. The second object of the Bill was to prevent British subjects being arrested without charges being stated and kept in jail for a number of years without any trial. This might not apply to people like the Frontier tribes, who did not own allegiance to the Crown and were certainly not British subjects.

Mr. Crerar, replying, emphasized that Dr. Gour had misquoted the Repressive Laws Committee's report and in spite of the fact that his attention had been drawn to the mistakes in drafting he did not amend it.

Eventually the House divided and by 54 against 41 voted for the consideration of the Bill. The Bill was then taken clause by clause.

Mr. COSGRAVE declared that the section under discussion proposed to cut the basis of the whole of the present Act and, therefore, in the interests of law and order, for which Sir Hari Singh took responsibility in 1921 when he appended his signature to the Repressive Laws Committee's report, which was satisfied that the executive would use its powers with caution and discretion (cheers), the speaker opposed the motion.

Lala LAJPAT RAI said the whole of the law was passed in a wrong spirit and was maintained in the wrong spirit. He explained that he was forced to make general observations after Mr. Cosgrave's general attack on the bill as a whole. He contended that the Governments of Madras and Bombay did not use this law to put down the non-cooperation movement. Indeed, one local Government went so far as to boast of having put down that movement in its province without recourse to this extraordinary law. This fact showed that the ordinary law was enough to deal with disorders of any kind. Mr. Crerar had asked for an instance of the abuse of this power. What more flagrant abuse could there be than the Punjab Government's declaration of private meetings of the Lahore City Congress Committee as unlawful, and the Government of India had come to the rescue of the Punjab Government in remedying the outrageous blunder, and four persons were arrested and were released only after the Government had realised their own mistake. It had been argued that the law was effective because volunteers were sentenced and unlawful associations were controlled. 'We went to jail not because this law was powerful but because we did not want to defend ourselves. We went to jail to vindicate what we considered to be our position. Sometimes in the progress of the country there might be disturbances of the peace. These are, indeed, inevitable, but if you cannot manage to put down sporadic outbursts by the ordinary law, then you have proclaimed yourself as unfit to rule India. The present law is a

slur on India and a handicap on her progress. If any one is guilty of any violence or intimidation, punish him by all means in the ordinary course of justice, but not by the cowardly process given in this Criminal Law Amendment Act. (Hear, hear.) The Secretary of State and the Under-Secretary of State have admitted in the House of Commons that the political situation has vastly improved. If so, be consistent and repeal this obnoxious law from the Statute Book." (Applause.)

Mr. Crerar said that in spite of his challenge, no instance had been quoted of conspicuous abuse of the Act. The instance quoted by Lala Lajpat Rai was one of application of the Seditious Meetings Act. The argument of the supporters of the bill seemed to be that, while making a charge of criminal breach of trust, they wanted a favourable judgment by producing evidence merely to prove criminal trespass. (Laughter.) He hoped the House would not lend its support to such faulty arguments.

Mr. Yamin Khan faced considerable interruption as he argued against the bill. He first declared as a lawyer that the bill would make the law all the more ambiguous and, therefore, liable to abuse, and as for political considerations, Sir Harcourt Butler, as Governor of the United Provinces did not resort to this law without the full concurrence of the Members of his council and the Ministers, including the Raja of Mahmudabad, Mr. Chintamani and Pandit Jagat Narain (Voices : 'No, no'.)

Mr. Sherwani declared that at a time when communal associations had been causing havoc in the country this Act had not been used, while when it was used against political associations it failed in its purpose. Why then retain this law, especially when sections 144 and 108 combined gave the Government all the powers they wanted to suppress individuals and associations ? (Hear, hear) He instanced the arrest of 55 members of the U P. Congress Committee as an abuse of the law.

Sec. 2 repealing sub-clause (1) of clause (2) of section 15 of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act was then put to the vote and carried by 52 votes against 39.

An interesting discussion followed on the clause of the Bill which gives power to any aggrieved person to appeal to a High Court.

Pandit Malaviya moved an amendment in order to rectify a drafting error complained of earlier in the day. The effect of the amendment is that any person convicted under the provisions of section 17 may appeal to a High Court on the ground that the association in respect of which he was convicted was not an unlawful association.

Mr. Tonkinson, on behalf of the Government, remarked that this amendment altered the substance of the original clause.

The President wanted to know from the Home Member if this was so.

Mr. Crerar stated that the amendment did change the construction and even the intention of the original Bill and he would raise an objection at a later stage.

The President remarked that, if that was so, the Government should have objected to the moving of the amendment. If the Government wanted to oppose the passing of the Bill, then they should object to the moving of the amendment which altered the substance of the Bill.

*Sir Basil Blackett*.—Our draftman only helped the mover to have the language of his Bill altered in the manner required by the nonofficials. The Government believe that it alters the substance of the Bill but in view of the objection you have raised and after this explanation, I am sure the Home Member would have no objection not to press his idea.

The Chair thanked the leader of the House for having relieved the Chair of the difficulty.

After further discussion clause 3, as amended, was passed. No other amendment was moved. The Bill, as amended, was then passed by 52 votes against 39. The Assembly then adjourned for the day after disposing only one item out of 40 on the agenda.

#### SELECT COMMITTEE ON TARIFF BILL.

On the 24th AUGUST Sir George Rainy moved for reference to a select committee of the second Tariff Bill reducing the duty on artificial silk yarn from 15 to 7 half per cent., in regard to which he had a discussion with members of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, who were in favour of it. The Bill also sought to reduce, and in some cases remove, the duty on certain machinery and other materials required in India largely by mills. Sir George Rainy emphasized that the House would be only confirming the general principle that machinery and materials should, as far as possible, be free from duty. There was, however, the reservation that for particular classes of machinery or for particular materials it might be in the



interests of the country that they should be subject to an import duty. Each particular item must, therefore, be left to the select committee for decision.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya held it unfortunate that the Government should have come forward with these Bills without giving the House an opportunity of discussing the report of the Tariff Board. He was particularly anxious that the Government should give such an opportunity when it did not accept the Tariff Board's conclusions in their entirety.

Mr. Seshu Iyengar urged the inclusion of certain items of machinery and stores in the interests of the handloom industry.

Sir George Rainy replied that the practice advocated by Pandit Malaviya in such kindly tones would, if accepted, involve a revolutionary change in their constitutional practice, which was for the executive to first make up its mind and then seek the Legislature's approval. The case of the steel industry was different, as then there was unanimity of opinion on all the main issues, while in the present case there was a difference of opinion. The Government could not divest itself of its responsibility and could not come to the Legislature with an open mind. He assured Mr. Seshu Iyengar that the handloom machinery was included for free import.

The motion was carried.

#### CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL. (INSULT TO RELIGION).

Mr. Crerar next introduced his Bill to amend the Indian Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code to penalize insult to religion.

The Bill is called the Criminal Law Amendment Bill and proposes to add section 295-A to the Indian Penal Code, which reads as follows:—

Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by signs or by visible representations or otherwise, intentionally insults or attempts to insult the religion, or intentionally outrages or attempts to outrage the religious feelings of any class of his Majesty's subjects, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with a fine, or with both.

The offence is made non-bailable and non-compoundable, but arrest shall not be without a warrant and a magistrate below the rank of presidency magistrate or first class magistrate shall not try it. Consequential amendments are also made in the Criminal Procedure Code.

Mr. Crerar expressed his hope and confidence that all members of the House would unanimously agree that this was an opportune and desirable measure.

#### BAMBOO PAPER INDUSTRY (PROTECTION) BILL.

The Bamboo Paper Industry (Protection) Bill giving effect to the Tariff Board's report was referred to a select committee which is to report by Aug. 31.

#### DIVORCE ACT (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Mr. Crerar's Bill amending the Divorce Act introduced by his predecessor during the last session was considered and passed without discussion. The Bill provides for the appointment of an officer to exercise the duties of the King's Proctor in India.

#### CIVIL PROCEDURE CODE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Home Member then moved that the Bill amending the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, be referred to a select committee. The Bill gives effect to the recommendation of the Civil Justice Committee that in every second appeal to the High Court the appellant should deposit in the court by way of security for the respondent's costs a definite sum as the amount of any costs awarded against him in the lower courts *plus* the amount at which the respondent, if successful, could tax his pleaders' fee under the High Court rules, subject to certain conditions.

Mr. Neogy gave the lead, which was followed, among others, by Sir Hari Singh Gour and Mr. Jayakar, and resulted in the end in the defeat of Mr. Crerar's motion by a majority of five votes.

#### BILL TO AMEND SEC. 96 OF CIVIL PROCEDURE CODE.

Mr. Crerar's motion to circulate his Bill amending section 96 of the Civil Procedure Code, which was introduced at the last session in Delhi, was opposed by Dr. Gour and critically referred to by Mr. Doraiswami Iyengar. But the motion for circulation was allowed to be passed.

## VOLUNTEER POLICE FORCE BILL.

Mr. Crerar then moved the reference to a select committee of the Volunteer Police Force Bill. He hoped that the Bill in its main objects would have a considerable measure of approval of the House and he did not imagine that in matters of detail the differences could not be composed in the select committee.

Lala Lajpat Rai asked whether the House would be committing itself to the principle of the Bill to the extent that if the select committee wished to make the force temporary (as was proposed) or permanent it could do so.

Mr. Crerar replied that the force was to be temporary and the proposal to place it on a permanent footing would not be within the scope of the select committee.

Thereupon a number of members wished to speak, and as it was already late the President adjourned the House.

## ENQUIRY INTO INDIAN BANKING.

On the 25th AUGUST the discussion was resumed on Mr. Haji's resolution for an enquiry into the position of Indian Banking.

Mr. K. C. ROY moved an amendment at the end of the resolution for the addition of words to the effect that the committee should report what, if any, measures were desirable to regulate and control banks and banking business in this country. He alluded to the concluding part of the speech of Sir Purshotamdas that the Indian investor was child-like, etc. The Bombay member had no time to develop his views on this aspect in the Delhi session, but it was to protect investors that he moved the amendment. Who could deny that the investor required protection after the series of bank failures in India since 1913. In the Punjab there were no less than a dozen bank failures, including two belonging to Lala Harkishan Lal. In the United Provinces there was the failure of the Bank of Upper India. In Bengal they had the latest instance of the National Bank. Now he asked what had the Government of India done to restore confidence in investors? Practically *nil*. Of course, there were, along with bank failures, a series of liquidation proceedings but the bank failures had given a good harvest to liquidators. (Laughter). Of course, there were frequent demands for an enquiry into the banking system, and the Government had been promising an enquiry since 1914. Now here was an excellent opportunity to redeem that promise, but Sir Basil Blackett could not be blamed for not instituting an enquiry. He had a very strenuous time since he took up the finance portfolio of India. If there was delay on his part, it was not due to his dislike for investigation.

The amendment of Mr. Roy was accepted and the resolution as amended was put and carried, the Government not challenging a division.

## Skeen Committee's Report.

The Assembly next took up the discussion on Dr. Moonjee's resolution relating to the Skeen Committee's report. His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief was also present.

Dr. MOONJEE moved that as a beginning in the direction of preparing India for self-defence, immediate steps be taken to bring about Indianization of half the cadre of officers in the Indian Army, unanimously recommended by the Skeen Committee, within a period of 15 years and to carry out the unanimous recommendations of the committee with regard to the establishment of an Indian Sandhurst and the recruitment of Indian officers in those arms of the defensive forces paid for out of Indian revenues from which they are at present excluded.

The mover made a half-an-hour's speech full of quotations from Arthur Vincent's book on India's defence. He said India's isolated position in any emergency was well described by the author in that book and by Sir Malcolm Hailey. One small raid by the Emden (German cruiser) on Madras had brought home to Indians the lesson of their helplessness, especially in a vast country like India with a long strip of coast line where a mercantile marine was carrying on its trade. On the land frontier the position was even worse. On the Burmese frontier they had their frontier exposed to attack by China which had a strong military force and which might fall into the clutches of some European Power, say Russia. On the north-west frontier they had ferocious, martial and uncivilized tribes and Afghanistan was getting militarily organized. Again on the Burmese frontier there was always anxiety for India because it was the hunting ground for freebooters and dacoits.

At this stage, Sir Denys Bray asked whether the last few observations of Dr. Moonje did not trespass on the relations of foreign powers.

*President.*—The question at issue is whether India is prepared for self-defence or not. The hon. Dr. Moonje is giving reasons for his views. I don't think these technical objections will weigh with the Chair.

Continuing, Dr. Moonje pointed out that on the Burmese frontier every adult of the tribes knew how to wield a weapon. In effect they had there an army of five lakhs on the north-west frontier. In case of any emergency Afghanistan's attitude might be luke-warm towards India. Britain alone could not guarantee the defence of India. But the people of India were descendants of martial races. What was the use of that, however? They were not given an opportunity to defend their own country. Let them visualize the position in India as it might develop within a few years. Indians must ponder over the defence of their country. The utmost that the Assembly could do was to put down the unwilling throats of British officers the unanimous recommendations of the Skeen Committee.

Mr. Srinivasa IYENGAR was cheered as he rose to move that the following be substituted for the original resolution:—

'Subject to the revision of the whole scheme of the defence of the country in any future constitution for India acceptable to the people of India and while feeling that the recommendations of the Indian Sandhurst Committee, specially those relating to the continuance of British recruitment, do not satisfy Indian public opinion, this Assembly is of opinion that the acceptance of the unanimous recommendations of that committee will mark a definite beginning in the Indianization of the Army in India and it, therefore, recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he may be pleased to accept those recommendations and give immediate effect to them.'

Mr. Iyengar explained that the purport of his amendment was that without prejudice to their claims for the right of self-defence and self-Government, the House wanted to impress on the Government the need for immediate effect being given to this unanimous report of the committee on which Europeans and Indians had admirably collaborated. He wanted an opportunity for Indians who were not inferior to any other race to get into all the arms of the defence forces of their country.

Col. CRAWFORD was glad that Dr. Moonje had accepted the dangers India faced and the need for an efficient army. The Skeen Committee's report had, while emphasizing efficiency, set up a time table and he feared that if that time table was accepted it would be passed even at the risk of efficiency. Then there was the established fact that British recruits were not forthcoming. (*A roir.*—Why?) Because, replied the speaker, the British boy did not wish to work in social conditions with which he was not content.

The report had next emphasized the need for reform in the educational system. The speaker saw no immediate prospect for this reform either. Thus the Skeen Committee scheme had fallen to the ground and was a failure because none of these two conditions on which the committee had relied for the success of its scheme was fulfilled. Education in Indian homes was defective.

The speaker's point was that as the problem of preparing Indians for self-defence must be faced, an alternative scheme must be considered and he wondered why the 8-unit scheme should be unpopular with Indians. They should have a military college in India immediately for training and should set up a second Indian army to take the place of the present army as the efficiency of the new dominion army was proved, because there was no margin for playing with.

Mr. K. C. ROY pointed out that the dominion army spoken of by Col. Crawford postulated autonomy to the Indian legislature, withdrawal of the King's Army from India and implied rights of citizenship and liberty for Indians to enter all branches of the army. Was the Colonel prepared for all this? British recruits knew the value of India in the chain of imperial defence and Gen. Skeen knew the dangers to India more than an ex-intelligence officer (Laughter.) The 8-unit scheme involved racial discrimination in a sphere where it should not be introduced. He paid a tribute to Sir William Birdwood for his efforts to secure acceptance of the Skeen Committee's proposals.

His Excellency the COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, replying to the debate, said:—

I think I need hardly say that I have listened with the greatest attention and

interest to the speeches which have just been made, and before I go any further, I would ask for your indulgence in the difficulty in which I am placed in making an adequate reply. You will shortly realise my reasons for asking this of you.

#### NO INTENTION TO SHELVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS.

From some of the speeches which I have heard, I rather gathered that some hon. members are under the impression that the Government of India may be inclined to wish to shelve or burke the recommendations made by the Indian Sandhurst Committee. I should like, if I can, to dispel at once any idea that may be prevalent to this effect. When the Committee was appointed, the Government of India realised the issues that might be opened up as a result of the Committee's investigations, and Government are prepared to face those issues, and to formulate their own policy after due consideration of them.

If the Government had wished to postpone consideration of this Report, it would not have been difficult to find justification for doing so, for, as you well know, the time is approaching for the visit of the Statutory Commission to India. The problems connected with the Indianization of the Indian Army have so vital a bearing on the administration and constitution of India that the Government might well have asked the Commission to include them in their general inquiry and might have refrained from formulating their own proposals until the Commission came to this country. Instead, they set to work on the Report with as much despatch as possible considering the extent and importance of the problems with which they have to deal, and have already sent their provisional views to the Secretary of State.

They had hoped at one time that it might be possible after consultation with His Majesty's Government, to lay some information about their policy and intention before this House during the present session. This however, has not been possible, for the Government of India's own provisional conclusions were not reached until shortly before the time when Parliament was to break up, and consequently it has not been possible for His Majesty's Government to formulate a considered judgment on them.

For these reasons, Government cannot indicate their views and policy in the present debate. They will, however, give the fullest consideration to such views and recommendations as are put forward by hon. members and will communicate the proceedings on this resolution to the Secretary of State.

Some hon. members may perhaps think that these problems could have been dealt with more quickly, but I would ask them to remember the magnitude of the whole question and the far-reaching and possibly irrevocable effects of a faulty or erroneous policy.

I think I am right in saying that it was some 16 months after the Committee first met before their report was issued, while it would probably have been considerably longer than this, had not Government been able to place Mr. Burdon on special duty and relieve him of all other work for some months to help the Committee in formulating their report. I naturally make no complaint whatever regarding the time taken, for we must, all of us, agree that it is only right that the Committee should take ample time to go thoroughly into the whole matter as they did. In so vital a matter as this it was obviously impossible for Government to delegate its own responsibility to any Committee however influential, and when we realise the time the Committee had to take, hon. members will probably agree that Government could hardly have dealt with the report quicker than they did.

#### A TWO-SIDED PROBLEM.

Let us turn to the committee's report. On the first term of reference the Indian Sandhurst Committee, after very careful investigation, reached the conclusion that the number and quality of Indian candidates for King's Commissions could not be improved unless the present number of vacancies available to Indians at Sandhurst were increased. Developing this argument, the Committee drew up a programme of progressing increase of Indianization among the commissioned ranks of the Indian Army up till 1952, when according to their programme, half the number of King's Commissioned officers in the Indian Army would be Indians. Beyond that the committee did not recommend. The committee, moreover, very properly laid stress on two other aspects of the problem both of them of the highest importance. They stated more than once in their report that all their recommendations were subject to efficiency being maintained; and they also emphasized the importance of retaining the requisite proportion of British officers in the Indian Army.

Just as the committee were right in emphasizing these two points, in my opinion, they were right in not proceeding to deal with them, for they were to some extent beyond their purview. The Government of India, however, must deal with them. as the committee would, I imagine, be the first to acknowledge.

The problem is two-sided. On the one hand is the question of Indianisation, of finding adequate opportunity for Indians to serve as combatant officers in the Army of India and of training them in the qualities of leadership and command. On the other hand is the question of efficiency, and closely bound up with it the maintenance of British recruitment. It is, I think, sufficiently clear from the utterances of the Government of India during the past six years that they have hitherto been, and are still sympathetically disposed towards Indian aspirations, and if there were any doubt on that score, it must surely have been dispelled by the very fact of the appointment and the composition of the Indian Sandhurst Committee.

#### RESPONSIBILITY OF EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES.

As regards the standard of efficiency, the committee state that 'it is not our purpose or desire that the number of Indian King's Commissioned officers in the Army should be increased without reference to considerations of efficiency. We recognize that in the Army there can only be one standard of efficiency, namely, the highest. We hold strongly, therefore, that the severity of the existing tests should not be relaxed in any way, and, if Indians capable of satisfying these tests are not forthcoming, then the race of Indianization must for the time lag behind the number of vacancies offered. We are fully alive to the fact that the progress of our scheme, as of any scheme, must be contingent upon success being secured at each stage and upon military efficiency being maintained throughout'. I feel that this is a point on which the whole House will agree, as they also will with the further point emphasized by the committee as to how essential it is that the educational authorities in this country must take upon themselves the onus of educating boys in the first instance, so as to make them suitable candidates for the army later on. That is really the starting point, and on the committee's own showing the development of the educational system of India on the lines indicated is a vital element in the scheme they recommend. Let us remember, too, that this must not be merely a question of Government effort. Public opinion and private enterprise must do their share. It is not possible that we should be under any misapprehension on this point, for I feel confident that no one will be able to deny the advance of Indianization if the initial preparations are duly and seriously undertaken, but equally no one must be allowed to think that the initial stage can be 'jumped'. In this connection I might perhaps mention the efforts which one of my colleagues, the hon. Mr. Das, is now making to establish a really fine public school in this country. I sincerely trust that his efforts will meet with the success they deserve, for the establishment and success of such a school might well go a very long way to solving the present difficulty in the matter of education, which has been pointed out by the committee.

I think, too, it may perhaps have been forgotten that the actual passing into Sandhurst is only the first of the many qualifications which are required of an officer throughout his career, and it can be no kindness to any young man to allow him to enter the army with lower qualifications than his brother British officers, for all have to meet on an equality later on as regards their promotion, examination, etc. The present standard of the examination for Indian boys is undoubtedly lower than that passed by their British brothers in England. As a result we know that, to our regret, the percentage of failures among Indian boys at Sandhurst is greater than that among English boys.

I trust I have not unduly stressed this question of the present want of education, and the necessity for improving it. I have really done so, because, as we realise, the committee have laid equal stress upon it, and it is right to emphasize how much their recommendation for a definite increase of candidates from year to year depends at every stage upon the high standard which they rightly lay down as essential.

#### FALL IN THE SUPPLY OF BRITISH OFFICERS FEARED.

As regards the maintenance of a due proportion of British recruitment, I can hardly do better than to quote once more from the committee: 'On the civil side of the administration the fear has often been expressed, and has to some extent been

realised, that Indianization will cause a falling off in the recruitment of British candidates for the services. The same phenomenon is liable to occur in connection with the Indianization of the Army. As we have indicated in our observations regarding 'eight units scheme', a continued supply of British officers, of the same high quality as those who have served India in the past, will, apart from everything else, be a great and valuable aid for the present and for some time to come to successful Indianization. We should, therefore, regard it as specially important to maintain the proportion of British recruitment required.' Naturally, however, it was not possible for a committee in this country to feel the pulse of the home recruiting market or to have full knowledge of what the effect of any recommendations they might make would be on the probable future supply of British cadets, who have to be obtained in England. The authorities in England must be best able to judge regarding this matter, and when the Committee themselves point out how important it is to maintain the British proportion, it is only natural that both the Government of India and His Majesty's Government must regard the whole matter from the widest point of view.

#### A QUESTION OF IMPERIAL IMPORTANCE.

The Government of India are responsible for the defence of India, which depends entirely on the efficiency of our fighting forces and let us remember that we have no margin to play with regarding these in the case of the Indian Army. The Indian army forms a link in the chain of our Imperial Defence and naturally, therefore, no alteration in its organization which might in any way affect its efficiency can be taken without the fullest consideration of His Majesty's Government, which is ultimately responsible for Imperial security.

During the last great war the Indian Army played its part in upholding the integrity of our Empire. We know this integrity was maintained by fighting in practically all parts of the world and never let us forget the fact how fortunate India was that such fighting did not take place within her own territories. I trust it may be years before another great war comes to scourge the world, but should this occur, he would be a very rash man who would prophesy the arena in which the contest would or would not be waged. Should the actual defence of India be then forced upon us, we must remember that failure here, besides spelling disaster for India, must react on the Empire as a whole, and consequently the British Government would be failing in their duty if they did not fully satisfy themselves that any recognition of the army did not in any way cause inefficiency.

When we realise the great responsibilities inherent in his Majesty's Government for matters which may vitally affect the security and defence of the whole Empire, I feel confident hon. members will not wish to hurry his Majesty's Government unduly in such a matter as this.

As I have already said, the provisional views of the Government of India have been submitted to the Secretary of State, while I have also explained how it has been impossible for the British Cabinet as yet to arrive at any decision.

I believe, sir, that we are all at one on the twin purposes of assisting Indians to take increasing place in the field for the defence of India, and at the same time in making sure that the methods chosen to do this do not directly or indirectly weaken the instrument of self-defence on which India must rely.

If this resolution or any amendment to it, is passed by hon. members, Government, for the reasons which I have explained at length will have no option but formally to oppose it. But I hope that this House will prefer to treat the debate rather as a means for eliciting the opinions of members than as an attack on Government. Let us not prejudice the atmosphere in which his Majesty's Government will deal with the report by recording a hostile vote before even provisional conclusions have been reached by them. I sincerely hope, therefore, that, after discussion, the resolution will be withdrawn. The house then adjourned till the 29th August.

### The Viceroy's Address.

ON THE 29th AUGUST H. E. Lord Irwin addressed the joint session of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly. His Excellency's address was from beginning to end a plea for goodwill and cooperation from responsible leaders of both communities and others in order to arrive at a practical solution of the communal problem. His Excellency said:—

Gentlemen,—Little more than a year ago, I invited India to pause and

consider seriously the communal situation and then I appealed to leaders and the rank and file to pursue peace and cultivate a spirit of toleration towards one another. For several months past I have had it in my mind to speak to the conscience and heart of India upon that question which still dwarfs all others in her life. But I have felt some doubt as to the most convenient means of doing it. I finally came to the conclusion that there was no more appropriate way of reaching the ear of the multitudes of India than by addressing them through the representatives of India in the Central Legislature. Accordingly I decided in exercise of the statutory privilege conferred upon me by the Government of India Act to ask the members of the Legislature to meet me here today and I am gratified that so large a numbers of hon. members of both Houses have been able to attend.

#### TOLL OF BLOODY STRIFE.

Let me recall the salient incidents of India's recent history. I am not exaggerating when I say that during the 17 months that I have been in India the whole landscape has been overshadowed by lowering clouds of communal tension which have repeatedly discharged their thunderbolts spreading far throughout the land devastating havoc. From April to July last year Calcutta seemed to be under the mystery of some evil spirit which so gripped the minds of men that in their insanity they held themselves absolved from the most sacred restraints of human conduct. Honest citizens went abroad in peril of their lives from fanatical attacks and the paralysis that overtook the commercial life of a great metropolis was only less serious than the civic loss that followed from naked and unashamed violation of the law, which perforce had to be reasserted by methods drastic and severe. Since then we have seen the same sinister influences at work in Pabna, Rawalpindi, Lahore and many other places and have been forced to look upon that abyss of unchained human passions that lies too often beneath the surface of habit and of law. In less than 18 months, so far as numbers are available, the toll taken by this bloody strife has been between 250 and 300 killed and over 2,250 injured.

#### UNREDEEMED SORROW.

While angry temper reigns, we are not always sensible of the tragedy that lies behind figures such as these. The appreciation of it is dulled in the poisoned atmosphere which for the time prevails, suggesting that such things are inseparable from the defence of principles jealously revered, and tempting men to forget how frequently in history the attempt has been made to cloak such crimes against society in honourable guise. But let us translate these things into terms of human sorrow and bereavement and let our minds dwell in pity and in shame upon the broken human lives that they represent—mothers robbed of sons whose welfare they counted more precious than their own, the partnership of lives severed, the promise of young life denied. The sorrows of war are often mercifully redeemed, as many of us have known, by an element of self-sacrifice that transfigures and consecrates them to the achievement of some high purpose. But here over these domestic battlefields sorrow holds sway unredeemed by any such transforming power and speaks only of the senseless and futile passions that have caused it.

#### REACTIONS ON INDIA'S FUTURE.

Nor are the many houses of mourning the only measure of the damage which is being done to India. Is there not much in Indian social life that still cries out for remedy and which the enlightened India of today would fain mould otherwise? Nowhere perhaps is the task before the reformers more labourious, for in India civilization is age-long immemorial and all things are deeprooted in the past. United must be the effort if it is to gain success and on the successful issue of such work depends the building of the Indian nation. Yet the would-be builders must approach their task sorely handicapped and with heavy heart so long as the forces to which they would appeal are distracted and torn by present animosities, for nothing wholesome can flourish in unwholesome soil and no one may hope to build a house to stand against the wind and the rain and the storm of life upon foundations that are rotten and unsound.

#### EFFECT ON CONSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS.

And what shall we say of the effect of these troubles upon India's progress in the field of constitutional evolution? There are many who hold that the very

Reforms that were designed to lead India along the peaceful road of political development have by reasons of the political power that they conferred been directly responsible for the aggravation of these anxieties. True it most certainly is that national self-government must be founded upon the self-government and self-control of individuals. Where private citizens do not possess these qualities political self-government of a nation is an empty name and merely serves to disguise under an honourable title the continuance of something perilously akin to civil war.

#### GOVERNMENT'S DUTY.

And thus this problem, of which the reactions upon the future of India must be so intimate, is a problem with which Great Britain not less than India is vitally concerned, for India desires to win self-government and it is Great Britain's self-appointed task to guide her to this end. Surely it is evident that those who desire to win and those who desire to lend assistance in the winning are mutually and vitally confronted with the necessity of laying the spectre that besets the path of their common hopes. By the logic of our purpose or desires we are partners in the task and no one of us can here shirk or decline responsibility of the burden which India's unhappy disunion imposes on the Government. The figures I gave earlier in my speech are eloquent. It is our inalienable duty to preserve and to vindicate the law. We must make mistakes in doing it—there are few human beings who can avoid them—but if we make them, they are, believe me, mistakes made in the course of a genuine attempt to discharge the difficult and painful duty that is ours.

#### NEED FOR CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORT.

But I cannot reconcile it with my conception of a real and effective partnership in this matter between Great Britain and India to confine the responsibility either of myself or my Government to a mere repression of disorder, necessary as that is. The situation, as I see it today, demands a more constructive effort. A year ago an appeal was made to me by many men of influence and distinction that I should take the initiative of convening a conference to examine any means that might hold out promise of amelioration. For reasons which seemed to me convincing, I thought it inadvisable to take that step and I have not wavered in my conviction that my decision was well-founded. But the passage of events between that time and this has compelled me perpetually to review the grounds on which I then formed my judgment. I had hoped that in answer to my appeal to the communities it might not have been impossible that they themselves, freely taking counsel together, might have reached an agreement genuine, convinced and thus effective, that would have brought the much desired and long sought for relief from these distractions.

#### A WELCOME INDICATION.

In this respect my hopes have been disappointed. Partial agreements, it is true, have been reached in regard to this or that aspect of the problem, reflecting much honour upon those who exposed themselves, I do not doubt, to considerable risk with many of their own friends in making them. But so far as I can judge, those agreements have failed to offer that fundamental solution of the problem and to gain that measure of acceptance which are necessary if we are to win through the present distress. And one condition remains which is, as I said last year, that no conference can offer any hope of success unless those participating in it are truly with a will to peace. It was with real pleasure that I observed statements recently in the press which indicated that fresh efforts might be made to bring together Hindus and Muslims for the discussion of those matters. Any such attempt deserves the active good-will and support of all who care for India's welfare and good name. I myself have long been considering anxiously whether any action by Government could help to stimulate that general desire of reconciliation, without which nothing can be done.

#### A CONFERENCE OF LEADERS.

It is not easy or perhaps possible for me to give a positive or assured answer to these reflections. In matters of this kind each man must search his own heart and answer for himself whether he does in truth or without reserve desire to play his part as an apostle of peace and whether those associated with him are like minded. But this I can say. If it were represented to me by the responsible leaders of the great communities that they thought a useful purpose might be served by my



convening a conference myself with the object of frankly facing the causes of these miserable differences and then in a spirit of determined goodwill considering whether any practical solution or mitigation of them could be found, I should welcome it as evidence of a firm resolve to leave no way unsearched that might disclose means of rescuing India from her present unhappy state. And if these representations were made by those who occupy such a position in their communities as to permit to assume that the communities would accept and abide by any decisions at which they might arrive on their behalf, then allying myself with them and such other leaders of public thought as might be willing to assist, I should gladly and cordially throw my whole energies into this honourable quest.

#### WARNING AGAINST PESSIMISM.

I have been told that any such efforts are foredoomed to failure and that all we might accomplish would be to contribute a few more barren pages to the story of unprofitable discussion. I do not underestimate the difficulties. I do not minimise the risk of failure. But difficulties are meant to be surmounted and outward success or failure is not the sole or the final test of conduct in this sphere. After all many of the greatest virtues in human history have sprung from what the world deemed failures. At any given time the evil forces of life may be so strong that the efforts we can make against them appear unavailing. Yet to allow this thought to drive us into a posture of feeble acquiescence in something against which our whole moral sense rebels and into losing our will for better things this surely would be deliberately to turn our back upon every thing that makes life worth living. There is an epitaph in a small country churchyard of England upon an English country gentleman whose lot had been cast in those unhappy days of English history when England too was torn by religious strife. It runs as follows:—'In the year 1,643 when all things sacred were either demolished or profaned, this church was built by Sir Francis Shirley, baronet, whose singular praise it is to have done the best things in the worst times and to have hoped them in the most calamitous.

#### Hour of Trial.

I doubt whether higher testimony could be paid to any man or more concise expression given to the forces by which this world is moved. There must surely have been times during these later months when Indian patriots gazing upon their motherland bruised by this internecine and senseless struggle must have been hard put to it to maintain their faith in India's destiny untarnished, and when many must have been even tempted to hate the very name of religion which ought to be man's greatest solace and reward. Yet may it not be that the purpose of these trials has been to test the calibre of our faith and that some day when the testing time is past those who with trust in their hearts and hope in their eyes have striven unceasingly to spread kindly feelings among their fellowmen will reap for India a reward that will repay tenfold the bitter cost at which it has been purchased?

#### BELIEF IN SPIRITUAL FORCE.

You will forgive me, gentlemen, for speaking in a strain that may seem to some to accord ill with the hard facts of life and the common atmosphere of politics. But I believe and I think India believes in the power of spiritual forces to assert themselves over their material expression by which they may often be betrayed and it is because of this belief that is hers and mine that I have ventured once more to trace out the only path along which India can lead her peoples to take their appropriate part in the fulfilment of the ordered purpose for humanity.

Thus ended the Viceroy's speech who was loudly cheered at the conclusion of his address which lasted 20 minutes.

#### Reserve Bank Bill.

After the Viceroy's address Sir Basil Blackett in moving for consideration of the Reserve Bank Bill, elaborated the Government objections to the majority scheme for a State bank and explained the Government scheme of a shareholders' bank, which would be Indian in outlook and largely Indian in composition.

At the outset, the Finance Member emphasized that there was practical unanimity in the select committee to a large extent on the ground covered by the Bill. Regarding

the majority proposal for the introduction of the conception of gold *mohur*, Sir Basil Blackett pointed out that the majority itself had frankly recognized that it was not practical politics to contemplate any immediate or early steps being taken to put gold coins into effective circulation. Further, the majority had provided for restoring the legal tender privileges to the sovereign. This was incompatible with the new gold bullion standard and also not in consonance with the proposal to introduce gold *mohur*. Any attempt at present or in the immediate foreseeable future to put gold *mohurs* into circulation, would only lead to a fresh debacle in the currency system. Steps to put gold coins in circulation could only be taken, if and when the gold bullion standard was discarded in favour of the gold currency standard by the Government in consultation with the Legislature. Hence, his amendment that all references to gold *mohurs* in the Bill be omitted. There was practical unanimity as to what the bank was to do. The difference of opinion was in regard to the method of constituting the directorate. The committee was agreed that it was fundamental to the idea of the reserve bank that it should be independent of the Government and the Legislature. It was well nigh impossible to obtain such a bank unless they adopted the device of a shareholders' bank which had the merit of providing a ready-made constituency for the selection of representative directors. But the majority scheme ignored this and intruded politics into the question of selection of the business board and made the board subservient to the Government or the Legislature. The Government had fully considered the question of a non-shareholders' bank if election by the legislatures was excluded and a satisfactory directorate framed. But the Government's present proposal was *via media*. The Government did not want the board to represent narrow or sectional interests and in the absence of shareholders there was no one to jog the conscience of the board if at any time it showed a tendency to take its responsibilities lightly. That was why the Government had now combined the original proposal of share capital with all that was best in the various alternatives discussed.

The Government were in full agreement with the majority that it was desirable that the board should be predominantly Indian, while not excluding altogether that co-operation of Europeans with Indians which, all agreed, was desirable. The Government had dropped the proposal that some preference in the allotment of share in the Reserve Bank be given to the shareholders of the Imperial Bank. The nominal value of shares was reduced from Rs. 500 to Rs. 100 and preference would be given to small subscribers domiciled or ordinarily resident in India. Further, they had fixed the dividend at 6 per cent. cumulative instead of allowing it to rise to 8 per cent. A gilt-edged investment offered in shares of Rs. 100 each at 6 per cent. at par would be within the reach of small subscribers, ensuring a wide distribution of shares in Indian hands. The strict limitation of the voting power of large shareholders would prevent the bank from falling under capitalist control.

Proceeding, Sir Basil Blackett explained the constitution of the directorate. Nine directors would be elected by the shareholders under a system of single transferable vote, thereby ensuring the representation of a wide variety of opinion and interest among the shareholders. An opportunity was given of electing a director apiece to the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and the Associated Chambers of Commerce and the provincial co-operative banks. The director chosen by the latter would specially represent agriculture while with three directors, nominated by the Government, there would be ample opportunity for seeing that agriculture was not under-represented and that interests, localities and communities that might otherwise be left out shall not go unrepresented.

Finally, for the purposes of the first board, instead of all nine shareholders' directors being nominated by the Government it was proposed to allow the Federation of Indian Chambers and the Associated Chambers of Commerce to elect two directors each out of the nine, leaving five to be nominated by the Government.

Concluding, the Finance Member urged the Assembly to accept this plan in the spirit in which it was put forward. It transferred the control over the Indian currency and monetary policy from Governmental to non-Governmental hands, from the Government of India and the Secretary of State to a non-official Indian business institution entirely independent of the State, Indian domicile and Indian in character, which would work in India for India along Indian lines. It would in short bring about a revolution in the financial machinery of India. The device of shareholders was essential for the purpose of securing the best and most representative board. Informed business opinion in the country was not in favour of a directorate partly elected by the Legislature and the Government was also opposed to it.

Why should the Assembly risk the whole on this one point? If the Bill was passed in the form in which it was now proposed by the Government it would be a landmark not only in the financial but also in the political and constitutional history of the Indian Empire? (Loud applause.)

Pandit Madan Mohan MALAVIYA, who led the Opposition, was cheered as he rose to speak. He regretted that the Government were not inclined to accept the select committee's recommendations. What then was the necessity of appointing the committee? The best course was to develop the Imperial Bank and convert it into a State bank. But if it was not agreed to the Reserve Bank must be a State Bank because the shareholders would not be able to elect the right kind of directors. All the profits earned by the bank would be the property of the people if it were a State bank, instead of a selected few. India had lost between 800 and 1,000 crores of rupees by the company management of railways and they could not afford to learn experience by another big sacrifice. The proposals of the committee were the best in that the directorate was to be appointed by every conceivable interest.

Pandit Malaviya quoted the cases of Germany, Norway, Sweden, France, Belgium and Denmark, where similar institutions were controlled by the Government or the Legislature. Concluding, Pandit Malaviya said that he doubted whether a reserve bank managed in the way suggested by the Finance Member would serve the best interests of India. On the other hand, he feared that indigenous banks might be crushed and their growth seriously hampered.

In deciding the form which the Reserve Bank should take, Sir Victor SASSON said two principles must be unswervingly followed. Firstly, the governor and the deputy governor must be under defined control and, secondly, the Legislature must have no hand in the election of members of the Board. He confessed to a partiality for commercial undertakings being left to private enterprise and he should, therefore, have liked to endorse the Government view in this respect. But in the present case if he applied this principle, this would break one of the canons he had laid down. The shareholders of this concern would be likely to be drawn from the class of small investors desiring safe investment and knowing little, if anything, about currency, exchange and finance. As the Government was disclaiming all right of control or criticism over the board, the latter might be said to be responsible for earning a dividend of 6 percent. to their shareholders and responsible for their management of credit and currency to their own conscience. So he was very reluctantly forced to abandon the idea of supporting the proposal of a shareholders' bank and was driven to agreeing to the institution of a State Bank.

So far he was with the signatories of the majority report, but he was at variance with them regarding some other points. Being a business institution, its board must consist of the best businessmen India could provide irrespective of cast, colour and creed. He would welcome the right of criticism by the Legislature on the main lines, but as a political body it could not have qualifications for electing businessmen.

The motion was still under discussion when the House adjourned.

On the 30th. AUGUST Mr. Vidyasagar PANDYA, in resuming the discussion, moved that the bill, as amended by the select committee, be circulated. He thought such a motion would have emanated from the Finance Member himself, but Sir Basil had tabled a large number of amendments to restore his original bill. This was an insult to the members of the committee and Sir Basil had threatened to drop the bill if his scheme was not accepted.

*Sir Basil*—What authority has Mr Pandya for this suggestion? The press reports about the committee proceedings, though not entirely inaccurate, were unauthorised and in some respects misleading.

Mr. Pandya replied that Sir Basil had uttered the threat even yesterday. He urged that the country should have a chance of examining the two rival schemes, because Sir Basil wanted to set up ANOTHER EAST INDIA COMPANY in India. (Laughter.) Speaking with 25 years' experience in banking and after studying the working of the Bank of England, he found that in the proposed bill of Sir Basil the directors would be responsible to nobody. The shareholders' meetings of the Imperial Bank had shown that the shareholders took no interest whatever and the directorate became close boroughs. The proposed Reserve Bank, if it was to be a shareholders' bank, would be nothing more than an annexe to the Bank of England. The Government was the biggest political party in the country. Why should it object to representation of nonofficial politicians on the directorate?

Mr. Shanmukham CHETTY, a member of the joint committee on the Bill, said

the Currency Commission did not discuss at all the question of having a State bank. He admitted that most of the central banks of the world were private shareholders' banks but persons not belonging to the nationality of the country of a central bank could not either hold shares or exercise a vote. If Sir Basil was prepared to concede that none but Indians shall be shareholders or exercise the vote, the speaker would agree to a private central bank.

*Sir Basil* responding, said he would be quite willing to amend the Bill to provide that only Indians and British subjects ordinarily resident in India shall have the vote.

*Mr. Chetty* said this did not meet his point. Then again, even if a majority of Indians subscribed now, what guarantee was there that these shares would not be transferred and that the control of the whole financial system of India would not be handed over thereby to foreigners? The speaker was opposed even to the creation of Indian vested interests in this matter and held that shareholders' control had always been found to be ineffective. He agreed that the bank must be free from the control of the Legislature and of the Government but would insist on a statutory provision being made to secure that either the governor or deputy governor of the bank shall be an Indian. They must select the best Indian available.

*Mr Chetty*, referring to the recent controversies, assured the House that if the bank scheme was to be wrecked only because the Legislature was not represented on the directorate, he would be no party to it so long as he could ensure that a majority of elected Indians were to be on the directorate. (Applause, in which *Sir Basil* joined.) If such an alternative scheme were submitted, he would consider it favourably.

Proceeding, *Mr. Chetty* explained some of the other fundamental points gained by the joint committee. He emphasised that the bank must be given some latitude as provided in the bill, if it had to carry out the obligation of maintaining the exchange. Otherwise they would only be reproducing the evils for which the Government had been responsible all these years. The provision that 85 per cent. of the gold reserve should be in British India was necessary in order to ensure a free inflow of gold into India. On the question of gold mohur, the committee's decision was only a compromise because there were several on the committee who wanted the immediate coining of gold coin. The revision in the bill would at least ensure that the standard coin of India was a gold coin. Concluding, *Mr. Chetty* did not describe the bill produced in Delhi by *Sir Basil* as a monster but as *Sir Basil's* Pet Child. (*Sir Basil*: No.) But that child was sickly, ugly, unwashed and unclothed. They took that child to Bombay in June. Bombay in June was not a sanatorium for a sickly child, but there was expert medical advice available. Even then, on the very first day the child showed signs of succumbing to the baneful influence of the mosquito-ridden slums near the Back-Bay, but fortunately the child was saved and they took it to Calcutta, where after inhaling the fresh air of the beautiful maidan, it began to recover and that child now was before the House, decent and well-dressed, and now *Sir Basil* wanted to disown it because it appeared quite different from what he had produced. If the bill failed now, the responsibility for it would lie not on the Opposition benches but on *Sir Basil* himself. (Applause.)

*Mr. M. K. ACHARYA* paid a high compliment to *Mr. Vidyasagar Pandya* for his excellent speech and interesting remarks on the conduct of the Imperial Bank. Commerce and industry could look after themselves, but he pleaded that the Interests of agriculturists should be safeguarded and hoped that they would be adequately represented on the directorate.

*Mr. Kikabhai PREMCHAND* could not support the proposal of the joint committee for a State Bank, in which politicians would have the right of election to the directorate. He still believed that the Imperial Bank could be made to serve the purpose of a State bank. This bank could open a few more branches, could coax into circulation very large stocks of value which did not find their way into the financial system of India. Its progress should not be disturbed at all. He was therefore, satisfied that the terms proposed in the present bill to the Imperial Bank were equitable and would increase its usefulness. He strongly opposed the creation of a Political Directorate because, in the shifting conditions of politics, several parties would spring up and every party in power would attempt to introduce its own men on the board. A shareholders' bank was, therefore, the sole solution.

*Mr. Jamanadas MEHTA* said that a Stable Currency was more important than even the creation of a reserve bank. There was no reserve bank in Canada or

Australia. There was one recently established in South Africa and India was to be the second country in the British Empire where this experiment of a reserve bank was to be tried. Under the shareholders' scheme, even a tailor and a tinker who could produce one hundred rupees could become a shareholder and qualified to deal with the currency of this country. Ninety-nine percent of the shareholders would not give a single moment's thought to the objects for which this institution would be built up but only for their own dividends.

Continuing, Mr. Jamanadas said that even on economical grounds the Government would be wrong in paying 6 percent. to the shareholders when it could, under the scheme of a State bank, borrow at 4 and 1-2 percent. and could the five crores of the shareholders' capital secure some four hundred crores that the bank would handle? The mystery of a shareholders' bank lay really in that the Government wished to maintain its existing control through the pretence of having a shareholders bank, because all the directors on the board would be subordinate to them through the governor and the deputy governor, who would not accommodate these men if they were stubborn.

Mr. Jamanadas maintained that the scheme evolved by the joint committee was a very modest one. It not only gave representation to the Government, to the European interests, but also ensured representation to the general inhabitant who was as much interested as any commercialist in the stability of the exchange and of the currency note he was carrying. In this connection he referred to the conference at the Viceregal Lodge and considered it a grave constitutional impropriety on the part of the Governor-General for by this action he would be taken as a partisan who could not take an impartial view when the bill went to him for his assent. "This grave constitutional impropriety will never be permitted in this country. I am glad that I was not a party to it. Only an accident saved me."

Mr. Jamanadas added that if the joint committee's scheme was not to be adopted, they should have electoral colleges consisting of members of the legislatures and presidents of local bodies, which would thus represent all the interests.

Proceeding, he declared that Sir Basil Blackett, who had in 1919 put his signature to a report advocating a fixed fiduciary system, had suggested in the bill a proportionate reserve. The House then adjourned.

On the 31st AUGUST Sir Purshotamdas THAKURDAS, initiating the discussion, said they had reached the second stage of reform which was formed by the adjustment of India's currency at least in one direction to what the India Office had been after since 1919. And if the principal popular parties of the House did not come to a common decision this bill would also be considered as a forced adjustment of India's currency system to what the Government of India required. He thanked Sir Alexander Murray for his kindly reference to the speaker and he mentioned this, particularly, as an Indian colleague of his (Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy) had called the speaker a wrong man in a wrong place on the Currency Commission. Sir Purshotamdas declared that he held steadfast to the opinion he had expressed in his minute of dissent to the Currency Commission Report. He feared that they would be starving India of banking facilities.

Sir Daniel Hamilton had appealed to him through a letter in the press to help the Indian agriculturist by supporting the Reserve Bank Bill. The speaker asked Sir Alexander Murray as a co-director of the Imperial Bank whether after the withdrawal of the privilege of using Government balances free the Imperial Bank would open even ten new branches in five years, and would not, therefore, the new bill do injustice to the masses by depriving them of a development which had been urged as of vital importance by series of Currency Commissions in India. He complimented Sir Alexander Murray on his very conciliatory speech yesterday (applause), and congratulated the Government of India on nominating this most capable member. (Applause) He did not agree with Sir Alexander that they should have some sort of a reserve bank, but wanted one of the right sort. He thought Sir Alexander did injustice to Sir John Bell who had, in spite of the opinion of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, stated candidly his opinion against the Reserve Bank. However, whatever the speaker's opinion regarding the desirability of a Reserve Bank might be he would support the bill as it proposed to remove the control now exercised by the India Office (Hear hear.) But in doing this they must not replace the responsibility now owed to India Office on a body of men who would not improve the position.

If they examined the shareholders' scheme carefully they could exercise control, but that the Indian tax-payer would lose over the bank in six years two and half crores, while the shareholders would have the unjust advantage of a cumulative guaranteed dividend of 180 lakhs in six years. Could the terms be more unjust? The only parallel to this was found in company railway management which had now happily been transferred to the State. Could the majority of nine directors representing the interests of the investors of a paltry sum of five crores be entrusted with crores of Government reserves, however depleted these were now?

As for the Viceregal conference, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta had frankly confessed that it was a mere accident that he did not join it, knowing as they did, Lord Irwin could never be guilty of a grave constitutional impropriety. (Applause.) The Viceroy, it was true, had the power of veto, and this power must be above suspicion, but an informal conference to which all parties were invited could hardly be called improper (Applause.) The conference succeeded in clearing up points and finding out how broad or narrow were their differences. He had the authority of Mr. Jinnah to say that the informal meeting was not arranged at any inspiration from Viceregal Lodge, but was suggested by non-officials also. (Applause.)

Continuing, Sir Purshottamdas said, Sir Basil had interpreted this measure as bestowing financial Swaraj on India. The speaker did not subscribe to this, but was prepared to look at it with the utmost goodwill. The interest of India must be served first and that of England next. (Hear, hear) The Government had opposed the legislature's representation on the directorate as it wanted to remove political influence. The speaker asked whether political influence did not imply power of patronage, and as this was possessed by Government the only fear of political influence was from the Government side and not the nonofficials. The boot is thus on the other leg'. (Laughter.) Sir Basil had promised them a predominantly Indian board, but had not put in amendments to bring this about.

Reverting to the subject of the Reserve Bank, he felt that they were building from the top and though in other spheres this had been practised in India successfully it was dangerous in the case of finance. There were hardly a dozen indigenous banks which were just carrying on and to ask them to make considerable deposits with the Reserve Bank without interest, was a millstone round their neck and would make them either lend on higher interest or close down. Was the Assembly prepared for this?

Sir Purshottamdas finally criticized the results of the exchange ratio policy. All the gold reserves had gone and so was silver going. Sir Basil gave them an undertaking in the joint committee that he would not sell the rupee coin by melting it.

Sir Purshottamdas continuing said the Government of India's successive successful loans had been replaced by an unsuccessful loan. They had resorted to borrowing in London and had borrowed on short terms at an increasing rate of interest. If this was the condition of the best borrower what would be the plight of the ordinary banker and merchant borrower? The *Englishman* of Calcutta had rightly declared that this Mussolini of Finance entrenched behind official walls could ignore this, but not so banks and merchants who had to pay their way. (Laughter and applause) The *Statesman* too had criticised the Government.

Twelve months ago the Finance Member was boasting that there was no demand for money. Today as a result of the Finance Member's policy of deliberate disturbance there was stringency and the Finance Member would have further to borrow in London to relieve demands in the busy season. A statistician of London and Sir Daniel Hamilton had openly confessed that the Bank of England had to go down on its knees to the Federal Reserve Bank for gold, and Sir Daniel had suggested that if only Indian agriculture could be organised Indian gold reserves alone could meet the needs of the Empire. Sir Purshottamdas declared that if England needed gold, why not frankly come to the Assembly and plead that as during the war India helped physically she could now help England financially? 'I shall appeal for frankness and mutual trust and I trust the Assembly will rise to the occasion if properly approached. Any short cuts, any other device must engender distrust and want of mutual confidence and that would be most suicidal in any measure regarding finance and currency. (Applause.)

Mr. Rangaswami IYENGER, who took an important part in the formulation of the compromise, supported the constitution of a reserve bank. He said the institution of a national central reserve bank was a measure of distinct benefit to the country.

As he conceived it a central bank subserved three distinct public purposes and involved the discharge of public functions by a public authority not controlled by Government on the one hand and certainly responsible to the public on the other. A central reserve bank sought to control and regulate the issue of paper currency and will have the duty of maintenance of other token currency. These two duties had been discharged by Government with disastrous consequences to India's economic interests and the time had come when this duty should be taken away from the Government which was acting under the leading strings of the India Office and the London money market and it would now be entrusted into the hands of an authority in India responsible to and representative of public opinion. The central bank will act as Government's bank. An attempt to make the Imperial Bank act as Government's bankers had been made for ten years but the bank had no control over the currency and could only control the expansion of credit in an extremely limited way by having a kind of secret alliance with the Government of India and Whitehall.

The speaker objected to a private shareholders' bank. This was economically not beneficial to India and was injurious to her financial interest. The duty of regulating the currency to the requirements of trade should be entrusted to an independent central authority. Huge quantities of money found their way by the transfer of treasury to the Secretary of State in London and were lent out in the London money market on very easy terms. The establishment of a central bank would get rid of this system. The speaker drew attention to the fact that at present the Imperial Bank only accommodated bankers from time to time, but solely at their sweet will and pleasure. So far as any bank could function as a bankers' bank it ought not to be a shareholders' bank. It ought to be a bank subject to legislative control of the Assembly. It should be wholly Indian, acting in the interests of India, and help the bankers in difficult times. So far as the central bank was concerned the necessity for having directors outside of the run of commercial corporations seemed to him of little moment. The House would be able to find a solution by which the central bank should have at its head a group of directors who would represent the Indian public, who would be predominantly Indian, who would be elected by Indian constituencies and who would use this bank for the economic uplift of this country.

Mr. N. C. KULKAR admitted that the proposed bank was a measure of liberalism in India's finances, in that it gave her control over her finances. Hitherto this control was exercised by the Secretary of State in the interests of bankers in London and was regulated by a foreign market. But there was nothing in the Reserve Bank which would eliminate the currency difficulties of this country. He opined that the proposed bank was not immune from the disasters which overwhelmed the Bank of England during the war at the hands of the British Cabinet. Therefore the bill deserved careful scrutiny.

Mr. COCKE, leader of the European group, emphasised that if they did not have this bill now many years would elapse before they have a Reserve Bank Bill again. Let them discuss the particular points of difference before running the risk of losing the bill. Some speakers had condemned the shareholders' bank, but they forgot that some of the biggest corporations and banks were run by boards elected by shareholders. In the case of this bill there would not be aloofness of the board from the shareholders. He suggested that in view of the deadlock on the subject the House might take into consideration the shareholders' bank. Under the scheme it would be possible in practice to get a board with a majority of Indians. In a bank of this sort a certain amount of European support and assistance was required. If, however, they were to have a State bank a difficulty would arise regarding the constitution of the board. He did not think the amendment regarding electoral colleges had the support of all sections of the House. There was a natural sentimental desire for gold coin. He trusted that this would not be a contentious point so far as this bill was concerned. He hoped that the House would consider favourably the position of exchange and indigenous banks regarding deposits, particularly as the Imperial Bank with certain advantages would be in the field in open competition with indigenous banks. He for one would have liked the Imperial Bank to be made the central bank—to be promoted to the sky leaving the earth to the exchange and indigenous banks. (Laughter and applause.)

Lala LAJPAT RAI was surprised that Mr. Cocke had again reverted to the shareholders' bank. He thought that all sections had agreed to a State bank. However he must assert on behalf of the non-official Indians that they would not agree to a shareholders' bank under any condition.

Continuing, Lala Lajpat Rai said the shareholders' bank did not guarantee a majority of elected Indians on the directorate. He supported the joint committee's scheme, but would not wreck the bill on that basis and would agree to an alternative. But the position of the two parties of the House was that they would rather not have the bill than sanction a directorate which was not acceptable to them. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Lahiri CHOWDHURY said that the Imperial Bank had been promoting foreign commercial interests. He would not therefore agree to a shareholders' bank. He urged that of the seats on the directorate allotted for the legislatures two seats should be set aside for those representing commerce and industry.

Sir Basil BLACKETT, with the permission of the chair, pointed out that the constitutional position of the Governors-General in India was not similar either to that held by the King or by Governors-General in other dominions. Even in other parts cases had been known when under the aegis of the King or the Governor-General discussions had been arranged at a time when the nation seemed to be divided. The Viceroy was the administrative head of the central Government and as such had the indubitable right to take interest in any administrative problem. The conference was not arranged in a partisan spirit. The Viceroy tried to hear other sides to secure, if he could, a solution, particularly as it was apparent that there was fundamental agreement on the principles. 'I am sure I have the sense of the whole House with me in saying that if in future an analogous occasion suggests the desirability of an analogous action the success which I hope will attend this action would be a precedent that would be very useful to follow.'

#### ACCEPTANCE OF NONOFFICIAL SUGGESTIONS.

Sir Basil dismissed Mr. Pandya's motion for circulation as involving delay which must be removed in the interest of trade at the earliest moment. During the last few days they had made progress towards a solution. There seemed to be little difference among the architects in regard to the internal structure, there was some regarding the extent of gold to be gilded, some disagreement, probably, as to the extent of the measures to prevent loose tiles falling. (Laughter). But the real difference lay as regards the external structure. He reaffirmed that the Government with a majority in the House still believed that a shareholders' bank would be in the best interests of the country, but they were willing to concede to those who advocated a State bank. The difference was thus reduced to the constitution of the directorate. He at once assured the House that he had no suspicion of the legislatures and had no disbelief in their capacity, but his point was that in making these special appointments the legislature overstepped its functions and entrenched on the executive field. But a more serious objection was that it was a political electorate that returned them. If the same electorate had sent them in for the bank's purpose they would be admirable for the purpose. In this connection the amendment suggesting electoral colleges appealed to him personally very strongly and was the best solution so far offered. The Government was willing to accept it in principle (applause), but must leave the details regarding the number of members to be worked out at a later stage. He assured Mr. Cocks that it was in the power of the Government to make the machinery of electoral colleges workable. He also conceded to Lala Lajpat Rai his point that the majority on the directorate be elected Indians. (Applause).

Sir Basil thanked Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, leader of the Swaraj party, for this assistance and hoped it would be forthcoming in future. (Applause). It was a good augury for this reserve bank that it should start its career in this Assembly in a spirit of cooperation. (Applause).

#### REPLY TO CRITICS.

Finally, Sir Basil Blackett replied to some points raised by Mr. Jannadas Mehta and Sir Purshotamdas. He repudiated the suggestion that he committed any breach of faith over the sale of silver, because he had made that point clear to the joint committee, and as for the sale of silver he would give no undertaking whatever as to the form in which this sale might not take place in future except that only surplus silver would be sold and that cautiously.

As for Sir Purshotamdas' attack on the currency policy of the past four months, Sir Basil Blackett quoted from the *Statesman* of Aug. 28 completely vindicating his



policy and stating that difficult problems had been now set aside. Sir Basil said that he would only add that far from being depressed he was very proud of the great success with which the Finance department had dealt with a difficult period. (Applause) Sir Basil was glad that the atmosphere of last March was not present today and that there was a prospect of real adjustment of views all round. He was sure that the Reserve Bank held out a hope of enormous expansion for indigenous banks. If they made a smaller profit in individual items they would do tenfold business and make larger profits. Concentrated reserves in the hands of the central bank would be relet to indigenous banks to facilitate credit, prevent undue stringency and bring into the field the capital that was now lost to India.

Mr. PANDYA having withdrawn his motion, the report of the select committee was unanimously taken into consideration.

The consideration of the Bill, clause by clause, was then taken up. The amendments proposing branches of the Reserve Bank at Lahore, Cawnpore and Karachi were defeated, Sir Basil explaining that the Imperial Bank would give all the facilities at their centres and the opening of branches would be an unnecessary expenditure. Sir Basil also moved the deletion of Rangoon which, he said, was according to the wish of the commercial community.

Maung Tok Gyi challenged this statement.

The Finance Member withdrew his amendment. The House then adjourned.

On the 1st SEPTEMBER Sir Basil Blackett moved an amendment that members of the Indian or local Legislatures also should be disqualified from becoming directors. He contended that members of legislatures had to put in four months' work in the legislatures and if they were elected to the board then they could not put in the amount of energy required for an efficient running of the bank. It was undesirable that they should mix up politics with business. This meant no reflection at all on members of legislatures.

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, on behalf of the Congress party, opposed the amendment because this restriction would cripple the efficiency of the board. In course of time there would grow up a class of persons who would like to take part in business duties which appertained to the bank. Until that stage was reached it was certainly undesirable to impose a limitation which tied the hands of constituencies appointed under the compromise.

Mr. Vidyasagar Pandya reminded the House that members of Parliament were not debarred from becoming directors of the Bank of England.

Mr. K. C. Roy supported the amendment of Sir Basil Blackett and said: 'Choose politics or choose business'

Mr. Cocke saw no practical difficulty in accepting the amendment.

Mr. Jayakar considered it a slight on members of legislatures that they should be disqualified only for that reason, although they might be otherwise best qualified.

Sir Victor Sassoon suggested, that while insisting on the amendment, it might be explained that for a number of years it should not be put into operation.

Sir Abdul Qaiyum said it would be an advantage to have a member of the central Legislature on the board of the bank, as he would be able to explain matters connected with the bank of the Legislature.

Mr. Aney said that at present there were certain commercial constituencies which elected members to the legislatures. If the amendment was carried, the bank would not have the advantage of the advice of such men on the board. He strongly held that it would not be impossible for a legislator to do his work on the board and in the legislature in a proper way.

Mr. Ayangar, of the Finance department, quoted the recommendation of the Currency Commission for the exclusion of legislators from the central board of the Reserve Bank. This was desirable in the interests of the country. In Belgium, Hungary and Austria legislators were not allowed to become governors and directors of central banks. As regards the argument that legislators were nominated to the board of the Imperial bank, Mr. Ayangar said the position with regard to the central bank would be quite different. This bank would be controlling the credit of the country which the Imperial Bank was not doing.

Mr. Duraiswami Iyengar was surprised to hear the arguments advanced by a co-Ayangar. (Laughter.) Conditions in India were not similar to conditions in Belgium, Hungary and Austria. He was surprised that the Finance Member did not suggest the exclusion of worse politician outside the legislatures. 'Perhaps', Sir

Basil Blackett has the idea that politicians in the legislature are stronger than outsiders'. (Laughter.) If Sir Basil Blackett could do the work of Assembly and of the Finance department, the speaker did not see any reason why a legislator would not be able to work in his double capacity.

Mr. Yamin Khan feared that if a member of a party in the Assembly became a member of the board, he would influence the board by the politics of his party.

Mr. Miles Irving did not wish either official or nonofficial members of the legislature to be elected, as the former would influence it with the policy of the Government and the latter with the policy of their party. Parties in India were very strong and so were their influences. Moreover, most of the agricultural electorates being uneducated, particularly of the Punjab, where he came from, there would be no chance for bankers and financiers to be appointed on the board. Only party politicians would have a chance.

Mr. Goswami did not accept either the principle of the amendment or the arguments advanced in favour of it. Every reasonable and powerful man would have some political views. They would not be able to find anybody free from political views. Why did not Sir Basil Blackett exclude members of the European Association or any other political body from being directors?

Mr. Kelkar feared that nonofficial members would have to make a choice whether they should be members of the legislature or director of the bank.

Sir B. N. Mitra, while recognizing the Opposition point of view, pointed out that it was a question of choosing the best arrangement. Government wanted these directors to be free from influence of any sort. Government attached supreme importance to this amendment.

Mr. Fazal Rahimatullah remarked it was an astounding suggestion that the politics of the politicians would play any part in the management of the bank. If that was really the case, why did Government choose two members of the Council of State, Sir Moneekjee Dadabhoi and Sir Dinshaw Wacha, as governors of the Imperial Bank? Then, again, why was a director on the central board of the Imperial Bank, Sir Alexander Murray, brought to this Assembly? Was it not because his expert knowledge would be useful in guiding the destinies of the Reserve Bank?

#### GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT DEFEATED.

Closure was applied and the Government amendment disqualifying members of the central or local Legislatures from being directors of the Reserve Bank was put and rejected by 70 votes to 51.

#### A NECESSARY QUALIFICATION

An hour was spent in discussing Mr. Kelkar's amendment to delete the provision which laid down that only that person could be a director of the bank who was or had been at some time actively engaged in agriculture, commerce, finance or industry.

He was strongly supported by Mr. Joshi (labour representative) and also by Mr. Jogiah, Mr. Kunzu and Pandit Thakurdas Bhargava.

Sir Basil Blackett opposed the amendment, for the provision was a guidance to the electors as to the character of representatives that they should elect. The electors would have no direct interest in the bank and such guidance was very necessary.

The motion was rejected by 57 votes to 29. A large number of nonofficial members remained neutral.

#### APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNOR AND DEPUTY GOVERNOR.

Sir Basil Blackett next moved the deletion of the provision inserted by the joint committee that either the governor or the deputy governor of the bank must be an Indian. Sir Basil Blackett deprecated the introduction of racial distinction in the statute and emphasized that he had established his desire for the creation of bank with an Indian outlook by agreeing to provide for a majority of elected Indians on the directorate.

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta regretted that their past experience of the *bona fides* of the Government had proved the necessity for making a statutory provision in this connection. He asserted today that later enquiries had proved that Sir Basil Blackett and Sir Alexander Murray were wrong and the speaker was right in

declaring that none but a German national could be a member of the board of directors of the Central Bank of Germany. (Applause.) Foreigners could sit only on the general council.

Mr. Cocke moved for the appointment of one governor and two deputy governors and asked the Government to give a definite undertaking that out of the three one would be an Indian.

Mr. Chetty declared that the statutory assertion of Indians' rights did not introduce racial discrimination but protested against its being observed in the Government of India to the exclusion of Indians.

Dr. Gour also opposed the amendment.

Sir Basil Blackett emphasized that the Government was anxious to exclude racial and communal questions from this legislation and a way out of the difficulty was suggested by Mr. Cocke whose amendment he accepted in preference to his own. He also gave an undertaking that one of the three executive officers first appointed would be an Indian. As regards the succeeding appointments, these would be made on the recommendation of the directorate, which would have a majority of Indians. He appealed to Mr. Jinnah who really took the initiative in bringing about the Viceregal conference which had been such a success. (Applause.) He extended the same olive branch to Pandit Malaviya and also to Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar whose assistance had been so valuable. (Laughter.)

Sir Basil Blackett added the occasion was not one for laughter. He appealed for cooperation on the question.

Dr. Gour asked what about the latter appointments.

Sir Basil Blackett said that these would be made on the recommendation of directors and the question would be not that one of the three be an Indian but whether any one ought to be any thing but an Indian.

Munshi Iswar Saran felt that the undertaking was not enough and that there should be only one deputy governor and one of the two officers must be an Indian.

Mr. Jinnah considered the offer of Sir Basil Blackett to be reasonable and asked whether they could not trust the majority of directors who would be Indians to recommend Indians.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar regretted his inability to accept Mr. Cocke's offer. No suspicion or distrust was involved in the proposal which was nothing more than a legitimate effort to nationalize the institution. The Government should, on the other hand, be thankful for all.

Mr. Chetty asked what about voting by two deputy governors.

Sir Basil Blackett answered that at a time only one of the deputy governors should vote. He emphasized that after the first appointments which were solely in the hands of the Government were made, all appointments would be made on the recommendation of the board of directors and if the Government did not accept their recommendation the board had a powerful weapon in its hand to enforce its wishes as they controlled the salaries and allowances of these officers. Thus short of a statutory provision, the Government had met them entirely.

At this stage the President adjourned the Houses.

#### CONSIDERATIONS POSTPONED.

On the 2nd SEPTEMBER as the President asked the House to continue the consideration of the Reserve Bank Bill, Sir Basil Blackett moved an adjournment of the debate as the Reserve Bank Bill seemed to be in danger of foundering in the whirlpool of communal troubles and they wanted time till Monday to find a way-out.

He said that when the Government agreed to give up the shareholders' bank scheme, it was in the belief that some agreement had been reached on the point of elected directorate on the amendment put down by Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar. Unfortunately it is not true that we are quite in agreement as we thought we were. There seems to be a danger of the Reserve Bank Bill, a purely business measure, foundering in the whirlpool of communal troubles. They were unwilling to add any amendment to Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar's amendment (the reference is to Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan's amendment for the reservation of two elected directorships for Mahomedans) which raises a difficult problem. It would be very much better in the interests of all that the Government and leaders of the parties should have an interval to consider over the week-end whether this threatening cloud can be

dispersed without an undue storm. The Government hope to continue this business on Monday if there is a real prospect of a settlement being reached satisfying a large majority of members of the House. The Government agreed not to proceed with their shareholders' plan and withdrew it because they did not desire to put this Bill on the Statute Book against the wishes of any large section of the House. The same position seems to have risen with regard to the alternative. I hope that on Monday we will have found a solution to proceed in an atmosphere of goodwill all round. (Applause.)

Pandit Malaviya, Mr. Jinnah, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar and Sir Alexander Murray, on behalf of their groups, expressed their approval of the motion. Mr. Iyengar emphasized that it was essential that there should be unanimity on such a constructive proposal as the Reserve Bank.

The President accordingly adjourned the House till Monday.

#### BILL TO DEAL WITH SCURRILOUS WRITINGS.

On the 5TH SEPTEMBER Mr. Crerar moved for reference to a Select Committee the Criminal Law Amendment Bill intended to deal with scurrilous writings against religion, the committee which is to report within seven days to consist of Messrs. Srinivasa Iyengar, Nirmal Chandra, Mahomed Shafee, Rangaswami Iyengar, Jinnah, Ismail Khan, Abdul Haye, Arthur Moore, Ghuznavi Kelkar, Jayakar, Coatman, and K. C. Roy, Sir Abdul Qayyum, Sir Denys Bray, Lala Lajpat Rai and the mover.

Mr. Aney objected to that part of the Bill which related to procedure. He feared that the object of the measure would not be achieved by leaving the initiative in the hands of the local Governments. He joined with Dr. Gour in expressing the apprehension that this was one other addition to the defamation section.

Mr. Aney's motion was defeated without division and the motion for select committee was carried amidst applause.

#### RESIDENCE FOR MEMBERS OF LEGISLATURE.

Sir B. N. Mitra moved the appointment of six members for a committee to consider the question of the residence and accommodation for members of the Indian Legislature including the use and disposal of the Western Hostel, New Delhi, and that the Council of State be asked to nominate members to serve on the committee.

The motion roused considerable discussion including a lengthy speech by Sir Harisingh Gour. On the motion of Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, the matter was adjourned in spite of Government opposition.

#### BILL TO AMEND INCOME-TAX ACT.

Sir Basil Blackett introduced a Bill amending the Income-Tax Act of 1922 for removing a slight defect in the draft in connection with the question of assessment of tea companies.

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar asked whether the Government would keep in view their undertaking given at the last budget session to reimburse the loss incurred by the abolition of the export duty on tea by amounts to be recovered from tea companies.

Sir Basil Blackett assured the House that the object of the Bill was to enable the Government to assess tea companies to a higher income-tax due from them and their intention to make good the loss arising out of the abolition of the duty, therefore, still remained.

Sir Basil next introduced another Bill amending the Income-tax Act for carrying out a number of changes to prevent successful legal evasion.

#### BILL TO AMEND CANTONMENT ACT.

Mr. Macworth Young introduced a Bill amending the cantonments Act of 1924 in order to remove certain inconsistencies and bring the law in line with the existing Municipal Act.

The House then agreed to Sir Basil Blackett's motion referring to a select committee another Bill amending the Income-tax Act of 1922.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS.

The Assembly then considered supplementary demands for grants all of which

had been already approved by the Standing Finance Committee but the Assembly while agreeing to all the motions wanted time to discuss the last motion for a grant of Rs 75,000 for the Y. M. C. A. in New Delhi. The Assembly then adjourned.

#### INSPECTION OF EMIGRANTS.

On the 6th SEPTEMBER Mr. A. R. Dalal moved the ratification and acceptance of the draft convention adopted by the International Labour Conference concerning simplification of inspection of emigrants on board ships and the protection of emigrant women and girls on board ships. The resolution was adopted.

#### INDIAN EMIGRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. Dalal next introduced the bill amending the Indian Emigration Act, 1922, to give effect, not later than Jan. 1, 1928, to the first seven articles of the convention concerning simplification of the inspection of emigrants.

#### COTTON YARN BILL.

Sir George RAINY moved the consideration of the bill on cotton yarn as reported by the select committee.

The select committee had come to the conclusion that a specific duty of one anna and a half per pound on imported yarn would not prejudicially affect the interests of the handloom industry, but there were a series of minutes of dissent appended to the bill by several members of the committee.

Sir George Rainy, in moving the consideration of the bill, emphasized that the Japanese competition, which was helped by night work by women in factories, would be considerably reduced at the beginning of 1930. He also emphasized that the effect on the handloom industry would not be very serious. He explained with regard to the lower counts up to 30 that there was severe internal competition as against foreign imports. Therefore, the import duty would not have any effect in regard to these counts. As regards counts between 40 and 60 the increase in price would not be more than six per cent. The difficulty lay only regarding the medium counts between 31 and 40 counts. In regard to these counts there was a possibility of an increase in imports not only from Japan but also from China. Of course, there was competition from China in regard to lower counts also but on account of the internal competition it might stand the strain. But in regard to the medium counts the problem might become serious. The question was whether the interests of the handloom industry or the interests of the cotton mills in India should be considered paramount. He urged that the interests of cotton mills must prevail in regard to this question, especially in view of the probability of the serious competition with China in regard to medium counts. He begged the House to consider the bill with a deep sense of responsibility.

Mr. NEOGY moved the circulation of the bill as reported by the select committee for opinion.

Sir George Rainy objected on the ground that there had not been any substantial modification.

Mr. Neogy quoted a standing order that recirculation could be ordered at this stage.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar supported him in this condition.

The President, after hearing Sir Basil Blackett, gave the benefit of the doubt to Mr. Neogy, who then moved the circulation of the bill for electing opinion thereon. He asked the House to consider the various matters arising out of the bill. He made it clear at the outset that he was not opposed to the measure outright, but his apprehensions were many. The number of workers in the mills of Bombay whom this bill would support was one and a half lakhs, while the number of handloom weavers in British India was 60 lakhs. The select committee had not taken into consideration the fact that there might be a sympathetic effect on the prices of lower and upper counts if there was an increase in the price of medium counts. Mr. Neogy himself was told by a witness before the board that the handloom industry would be dead if there was a protective duty on yarn. The Government themselves had admitted that they were not sure what effect would follow after the imposition of a specific duty. The Tariff Board had never recommended a protective tariff in respect of any specific counts. Why then did the Government choose those between 30 and 40? It was well-known that imports of these counts from

Japan were more than from Lankashire. Could that be the reason? He did not want to underrate the national importance of the mill industry, but what had the mill industry done to its sister-industries, say the coal industry? Finally, Mr. Neogy pointed out that there was going to be a tariff enquiry committee in Japan very shortly and any hasty action on the part of the Assembly now might influence that committee to undertake retaliatory measures. The export of Indian pig iron to Japan was very large. He, therefore, asked the Assembly to ponder over all the points before coming to a decision. He therefore, pleaded for the circulation of the bill.

Mr. Jannadas MEHTA opposed the Government motion and supported Mr. Neogy's amendment. He opposed the Government proposal because it offered really no protection. The mill industry of Bombay wanted a full and square meal, whereas the Government only offered a crumb. He paid a great tribute to the industrialists of Bombay, whose capital had built up an industry of which the Government could well be proud. But it was going to the wall because of the Government attitude. If even today there was real protection, both the handloom industry and the mill industry could clothe the whole of India. He asked the House to remember the giant strides made by the Japanese Government, but here in India, conditions were quite different. Let no member attack the mill-owners as such. Let them consider the position of the industry. Of course, the Bombay millowners, being beggars, could not be choosers. That was why they were prepared to accept this small dole. Why should not they stand up like men and ask for what they deserved? In fact, the mill-owners of Bombay had recently come to the considered judgment 'that protection of yarn alone would render no assistance. That being so, he was surprised at their present attitude. The handloom weavers' condition must be understood fully. They were men without any resources and their industry had been killed by that fateful Ratio Bill. (Laughter.) 'You should weep instead of laughing. You do not know that by that one vote you have put the greatest handicap on handloom weavers'. Concluding Mr. Jannadas criticised the bill as a half-hearted, meagre and niggardly attempt to help the industry and demanded a genuine measure of protection.

On the 7th SEPTEMBER, resuming the discussion, Dewan CHAMANAL opposed the Bill, because he confessed he had absolutely no affection for the cotton textile industry. The Tariff Board's report contained a paragraph depicting the industrial worker's life and after that which man could have any sympathy for the Bombay millowners? He twitted Mr. Rahmatullah and Mr. Chetty for their attitude towards this Bill and pointed out that during the boom period the millowners distributed 178 per cent. dividend. Why did they not conserve a portion of it as was done by one or two other industries in India at that time? What guarantee was there now that as a result of this Bill the Bombay millowners would not put their price of coarse yarn which was consumed to the extent of £160,000,000. Proceeding, Diwan Chamanlal said: 'If you want protection for your industry your primary duty is to protect the interests of the workers and see that the consumer in this country is not penalized'. Concluding he said: 'This industry has been run on an unscientific basis of finance and it was not national industry, because it was run only for the few.'

Sir Victor SASSON did not agree with Mr. Jannadas Mehta and Mr. Neogy in delaying the measure. On the contrary, the necessity of affording the mill industry some kind of help, however inadequate, was extremely urgent and the urgency lay in the present situation in China. He foresaw that in the immediate future the Indian industry would suffer from dumping. The question of the cost of production would be secondary. They might find not only medium counts of yarn from Japan and China attempting to oust 3 per cent of Indian production, but what was more serious the lower counts driving out 25 per cent. of Indian production which was now consumed by the handloom industry. It was here that the one and half anna offered was of special value amounting to a protective duty of something like 23 per cent on coarse yarn.

Reverting to the allegation against the Indian textile industry, Sir Victor said that the millowners had no desire to hurt, much less to kill, the handloom industry. If he thought that the proposed increased duty on yarn would prejudice the handloom industry, he would not press for this measure. Only the Government would benefit by the proposed increase in duty to the extent of Rs. 22 lakhs out of

Japanese or Chinese pockets. He further referred to unemployment which would follow the displacement of workers, from spinning mills, if the duty on yarn was not imposed. As regards the charge against the Indian mill industry for not helping the Indian coal industry, he said the question of coal for the mill industry in Bombay was not very vital one in view of the fact that out of the 83 mills 72 were using electricity and out of the eleven five or six were now turning away from coal.

Referring to Mr. Neogy's remark that the Japanese would retaliate by stopping the import of Indian pig iron, the speaker said Indian pig iron was cheaper than American, and Japanese pig iron had not sufficiently developed to enable them to be independent of foreign nations. 'Our Japanese friends can no more afford to penalize our pig iron than they can penalize the jute products for the simple reason that it will hurt them more than it can hurt us'.

Referring to Sir George Rainy's remark that the Indian cotton manufacturer was entitled to come to the legislature and argue that if he was subject to the restriction from which his foreign rivals were free, he ought to be compensated. Sir Victor cited various restrictions. Firstly, the exchange policy of the Finance Member was responsible for putting Indian products at a disadvantage in other countries than their rivals. Secondly in Japan he saw mills working two shifts of 12 hours each with half a day for every week and children of eight, nine and ten, working at ring frames without any pay and as a favour to their parents. Then there was dumping going on in India. He quoted from a Japanese financial and economic monthly that the Japanese Government had laid down that in protecting industries half-hearted measures would do no good. So as we have not got the benefit in the country of a Government like the Japanese Government and as we are poor beggars we have to take whatever is offered to us. The position is that the mill industry is like a poor wounded man lying on a road and even the smallest help is something. I say on the floor of this House that unless there is a change in the world conditions this protection which is offered to us is not enough.

Pundit MATAVIVA made forceful appeal for accepting the Bill. He considered both the mill industry and the handloom industries and, therefore both deserving of necessary help. Every one was agreed that the mill industry had been hit hard by foreign competition. It was a matter of deep regret and shame that India should export cotton and import it back in the form of yarn. Why could not she manufacture it herself? The Government had failed to help the people and the country in this direction. They were left to the mercy of a Government which was irresponsible not only to the people of the land but also to God. The people had no power to force the Government to accept the Tariff Board's recommendations which were in the best interests of the country. In the circumstances the only course left for them was to accept the Bill and thereby help the mill industry to whatever small extent they could. The proposed measure would at least have the effect of stopping China and Japan from dumping their yarn in India and making the conditions for the mill industry worse than they were today.

Sir George RAINY respected the opinions of those who feared that the handloom industry would suffer, but their fears were exaggerated. Diwan Chamanlal had asked what guarantee was there that the millowners would not raise the price of coarser yarn. The Commerce Member replied that the history of the mill industry proved that such a development was improbable. As regards the argument of the possibility of retaliation from Japan Sir George said that this was also unlikely because India had not done anything by way of differentiation. Such an argument was possible if the Government had given effect to Mr. Noyce's proposals on differential duty against Japan. The Government were unable to agree either to a bounty or to an arrangement by which the Indian mill industry alone would receive machinery free of duty. The Bill gave the same kind of treatment to Lancashire as it gave to Japan. A great deal of responsibility rested with the House. If the Bill was delayed events might happen proving worse to the cotton mill industry.

Before the President put the motion of Mr. Neogy to the vote Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar quoted a precedent in which those directly interested in the industry refrained from voting. The President said it was a matter for the members concerned to decide for themselves as to whether to remain neutral or to vote.

Mr. Neogy's dilatory motion was rejected 37 votes against 68, a large number of members remaining neutral. The Government motion for consideration of the bill was then passed, 68 voting for and 36 against.

The bill was then taken up clause by clause and passed after speech by Pt. Kunzru.

Pandit Hriday Nath KUNZRU suggested that the sum of twelve lakhs of rupees which Government would realise from this new entry should be put at the disposal of the local Governments for the development of the handloom industry.

Pandit Malaviya, Mr. B Das and Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar supported Pandit Kunzru's suggestion. Sir George Rainy said it was difficult for him to express any opinion on the spur of the moment.

The bill was then finally passed as amended and the Assembly rose.

#### INDIAN TARIFF ACT.

On the 8th SEPTEMBER Sir George Rainy moved for the consideration of the Indian Tariff Act which removed the import duty on certain machinery and other articles and for reducing duty on artificial silk.

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar moved an amendment for recommitment of the Bill to the select committee on the ground that in this Bill India would surrender revenue for which there was no warrant. He complained that the select committee had not given sufficient attention to this aspect of the matter. It was the Government of India which decided to expand the recommendations of the Tariff Board with a view to add to the remission of the import duty on certain machinery when as a matter of fact there was no demand for it made by the Industries concerned. He assured that there was no desire on the part of the House to deprive the textile industry of what was due to it by way of protection. From the amendments tabled by Sir George Rainy himself it was clear that the schedule of the Bill had been hurriedly drafted and therefore required reconsideration by the select committee.

Mr. Iyengar's motion was lost without division and the Bill was taken into consideration.

Sir George Rainy moved for the continued imposition of 2 and half percent. duty on brass rules, leads, wooden and metal quoins, shooting sticks, galleys and metal furniture. The motion was carried.

#### DUTY ON ARTIFICIAL SILK YARN.

Mr. Sesha Iyengar proposed that the duty on artificial silk yarn should not be reduced. He said the Government proposal put a premium on foreign silk yarn and was likely to seriously affect indigenous silk yarn which was produced in very large quantities in several parts of the country. He particularly instanced the case of imports from China and Italy and urged that the proposed reduction should not be given effect to.

The motion against the reduction of duty was defeated by 52 votes against 35.

On the motion of Sir George Rainy the House agreed without discussion to minor alterations of the schedule not intended to interfere with the duty on silk thread. The Bill as amended was then passed.

#### BAMBOO PAPER INDUSTRY.

Sir George Rainy moved that the Bill relating to the development of the bamboo paper industry as reported by the select committee be taken into consideration.

Mr. Kelkar suggested that the Government should refund the custom duty paid by the importers when the interpretation of the law relating to this question was doubtful.

Mr. Cooke suggested that envelopes should be included under the definition of writing paper.

Sir George Rainy replying to Mr. Kelkar said that he could not hold out any hope but if a point of law was raised it was quite a different matter. If Mr. Cooke had brought to Sir George Rainy's notice his suggestion regarding envelopes early the matter might have been decided. He would, however, consider the question later. The Bill was taken up clause by clause and finally passed.

#### INDIAN SECURITIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the motion of Sir Basil Blackett the Bill to amend the Indian Securities Act, 1920, as reported by the select committee was passed.

#### VOLUNTEER POLICE FORCE BILL.

The Volunteer Police Force Bill was then taken up for consideration.

Mr. Crerar said he took it from the speeches made from the non-official benches that they supported the existing permanent police force in the country. The Bill



had been misunderstood in many respects. It was intended to enable district magistrates to create a force within their jurisdiction as an experimental measure to help the police and if the experiment succeeded then to make further progress with the scheme. There was, therefore, no such thing as strategy or political device. He hoped the House would acquit Sir Alexander Muddiman and himself (Mr. Crerar) for whatever share he had in inheriting the Bill of any Machiavellian intrigue. (Applause) From the opinions received as well as from the speeches made by the nonofficial members it was clear that there was no large measure of support for the Bill. He, therefore, declared that the Government had no intention to proceed with the Bill. The Bill was thereupon withdrawn.

### RESERVE BANK BILL WITHDRAWN.

Sir Basil Blackett then announced that the Reserve Bank Bill would not be proceeded with during the present session as there was no agreement on the question of directorate.

After the statement Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar asked if there was any chance of the Bill being proceeded with in the Delhi session or of its being not proceeded with at all.

*Finance Member.*—I cannot really add anything to what I have already said.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, on behalf of the Congress Party said it was a matter of great surprise and painful amusement that, the Government should have come to this decision and not explained the reason for this extraordinary procedure. He did not know who exactly was responsible for it, but the nonofficials had been at great pains to co-operate with the Government in order to establish a national State Bank. It appeared from Sir Basil's statement that the Bill might not be proceeded with at all. Surely, the Government were trifling with the liberty and dignity of the House and on behalf of the Congress party he entered an emphatic protest against the conduct of the Government, specially when the nonofficials had exceeded the limits of their cooperation. But the Government did not enable them to proceed with this Bill and suddenly threw a bolt from the blue. 'At this rate it is impossible to give cooperation in any business that the Government may bring up. It may be we have to amend the Standing Orders in order to provide that when it should have the right the Assembly is seized of the Bill of continuing the Bill notwithstanding any unwillingness on the part of the Government'.

Thereupon the Congress party left the chamber in protest. The Assembly was adjourned.

ON THE 13th SEPTEMBER the President announced a motion of adjournment from Diwan Chamanlal to discuss a matter of recent and urgent importance, namely the affront offered to the Legislative Assembly by the Government withdrawing this session the Reserve Bank Bill before the Assembly had had an opportunity of discussing the remaining clauses of the Bill. The President held the motion in order and as no objection was taken, the discussion was held in the afternoon when the censure motion of Diwan Chamanlal was carried, the Government not challenging a division.

### Skeen Committee Report.

The discussion on the Skeen Committee resolution was then resumed.

Mr. Harbilas Sardas was the first speaker to support Mr. Iyengar's amendment. Whenever a question of giving Indians their due share in the administration of the country arose, the cry of 'efficiency in danger' was raised by people of Col. Crawford's way of thinking. They wanted the army to be kept as a close preserve for the Britisher. Then there was the complaint that suitable material for the Army was not available. Was not India officering its armies in pre-British days? The fact was that the Government was deliberately not giving Indians opportunities to take a proper share in the army and therefore the right material was not forthcoming. He asked the Government not to give undue importance to the recent demands of the military classes. The intellectual classes must have a proper share in the Army. Present-day warfare was conducted by science and the composition of the Army must therefore contain intelligent people.

Mr. Cocke, of the European group, advised the Assembly not to press the resolution. His party was in full sympathy with the demand that the Army must be Indianised, but the time was not ripe for this action because they would have

to consider the details of the report, which they neither condemned nor approved of. His party had no doubt that in time efficient Indian officers would be forthcoming, but at the same time it must be remembered that in a matter of this kind it was better to think more of the future than of the past. It was very easy to be wise after the event. The whole subject would be tackled by the Statutory Commission because the Army was an imperial problem. He disagreed with Mr. Roy in thinking that the Skeen Committee's proposals, if not agreed to, would lead to an economic, social and political misfortune. It was very necessary to give the Government time to consider the details in all their aspects and come to definite conclusions.

Munshi Iswar Saran criticised the attitude of the Government of India in regard to the Skeen Committee as one of delay and postponement, in contrast with their hurry and bustle regarding the Lee commission's report. He emphasised that both had the virtue of being unanimous reports based on compromises, but while the former was given effect to with retrospective effect, the Government of India were now attempting to postpone the Skeen Committee's recommendations. He demanded from the Government of India a declaration as to when the report would be given effect to, if not the whole report at least a part of it, and if so, which part. Concluding, he said: 'It hurts our national self respect not to be able to defend our own country and to depend upon foreigners for our defence.'

Sir Abdul Quyum, a member of the Skeen Committee, spoke for nearly half an hour in support of the report, but pleaded for delay as advised by the Government. He feared that the apprehension of the martial races in the frontier that the report would be a source of disappointment had nearly come true, but still he hoped that the report would not be acceptable to the Government. Of course, the subject being a matter of imperial policy, they must proceed cautiously and carefully after consulting the opinion in India and in England. When the Council of State had decided against a similar resolution, there was no purpose served by pressing the motion and he thought it would be better to postpone it till the Delhi session. Before Indianising the Army they had to Indianise the thought and outlook of the people, who were now composed of several communities and spoke several languages. The Indian army was the only body now which was free from communal influences. If the efficiency of that body was to be tampered with, it would be ruinous to India. Britishers had been able to introduce something like nationalism, unity and uniformity in India. (Cries of 'Question'.) But that process was not yet complete. Therefore, instead of asking for too much, namely, of Indianisation of the Army, he advised the Assembly and the country to proceed with the recommendations of the Territorial and Auxiliary Forces Committee in each province and help young men to learn the art of soldiering. That would be more practical than pressing the present motion to a division.

Mr. R. N. Sinha accused the Government of deliberately following a policy of exclusion of Indians from the higher ranks of the Army. When the War broke out and the Government was in difficulty they created ten vacancies for Indians in the higher ranks of the Army. A number of years had elapsed since the War ended and not one more addition had been made to that number. A military college was also opened in those days which was abandoned at the close of the war. The committee had rightly observed that Indians were not enthusiastic about an Army career because only ten vacancies were offered to them. The opinion among nonofficial members was that the pace of Indianisation recommended by the committee was too slow. He hoped that when the whole scheme was being put into operation, circumstances would move the Government to accelerate the pace. The foreword to the committee's recommendations had damned the report in advance. The real difficulty was that the Government were unable to make up their mind to allow Indians an increasing share in the army. 'Let me tell the British nation that racial prejudices and imperial ambitions cannot go hand in hand.' (Applause.) If the committee's recommendations were not accepted, the verdict of history would be that the great British nation in moments of stress and difficulty promised India self-government and when the difficulty was over did not carry out their promise. He appealed to Britishers willingly and voluntarily to remove the shackles and disabilities imposed upon Indians.

Mr. Jinnah was cheered by all sections of the House as he rose. He congratulated the Commander-in-Chief for his assurance that the Government of India were determined to face the issues opened by the report and would not postpone them for the Statutory Commission to take up. (The Commander-in-Chief nodded assent.)

While the Commander-in-Chief had asked the House to express its opinion, he had also advised the withdrawal of the resolution. But how could the House express its wish without recording its vote? The Government's attitude was one of non-possumus. He, as one of the signatories of the report, must say that as no ground had been put forward by the Government for challenging the committee's conclusions, he must advise the House to accept the report. (Applause.) Col. Crawford's speech had amazed the speaker. He wondered whether the Colonel represented the better mind of Europeans in this country. Mr. Cocks came to the rescue of the colonel, but his speech lacked in spirit. It declared that Europeans must cease to think until the Government came to a conclusion. This was in sharp contrast to the Europeans' vigorous pleading when matters concerning their own interests were involved. It was said 'Don't wreck the army'. The policy of opening King's commissions to Indians was laid down in 1918. The plea that out of 350 million people ten suitable cadets were not forthcoming was an insult to the intelligence of the House. (Applause.) The House pressed and the Government yielded and the Sken Committee was appointed to consider the acceleration of the pace of Indianization of the officer ranks of the army in India. The main committee and the sub-committee collected very considerable material which the Government had most unjustifiably withheld from the House and the public. How could the Sken Report be dealt with justly by the public and the House without the possession of that evidence? The Commander-in-Chief had the other day declared that with the establishment of Mr. S. R. Dass public school in India the first of the very many difficulties in this connection would be overcome. The speaker asked whether the country was to wait till Mr. Das's public school scheme materialized. (Laughter.) Mr. Jinnah said he wished Mr. Das every success, but he asked the Commander-in-Chief to read the voluminous evidence of educational authorities on this subject. After further speeches the amendment of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar was accepted, the Government not challenging a division.

#### ADJOURNMENT MOTION.

On the 14th SEPTEMBER the President announced the receipt of notice of an adjournment motion from Mr. Acharya to discuss the serious situation arising in the B. N. Railway workshops as evidenced by the fact that the railway authorities had thought it necessary to order a lock-out and call in military police. The President remarked that he had ruled out of order a similar motion the other day as he had hoped that the situation would improve but unfortunately the recent action of the railway authorities had made the situation worse and he was inclined to admit the motion.

Sir George Rainy declared that he had no objection to the motion which was accordingly fixed for discussion at 4. p. m.

#### ACCOMMODATION FOR LEGISLATORS.

The resolution of Sir B. N. Mitra moved on Sep. 5, recommending the appointment of a committee of both Houses to consider the question of accommodation for members and the disposal of the Western Hostel, New Delhi, was then taken up.

Sir Hari Sing Gour moved an amendment that the committee should also deal with the allotment of quarters to members.

Sir B. N. Mitra did not see any objection to the allotment of quarters on behalf of members by the committee and left the amendment to be decided by the free vote of the House. The motion was put to the vote and carried by 52 votes to 22, Government members voting both for and against the amendment. The resolution, as amended, was also carried.

#### INCOME TAX AMENDMENT BILL.

On the motion of Sir Basil Blackett the Bill amending sections 2, 23 and 28, etc., of the Income Tax Act was circulated for eliciting opinion.

Sir Basil, replying to Mr. Duraiswami Iyengar, stated that the object of the Bill was to prevent the evasion of the tax by hook or crook by persons who should in equity pay income-tax.

#### FOREST CONSOLIDATION BILL.

Dr. Gour moved that the Forest Consolidation Bill, as reported by the select committee, be taken into consideration. Mr. Aney raised an objection to certain

clauses of the Bill and moved an amendment to give effect to his minute of dissent. The Bill was, however, passed without any change.

#### TRANSFER OF PROPERTY ACT SUPPLEMENTARY BILL.

Mr. Wright next introduced a Bill supplementing the Transfer of Property Act, 1882, and another Bill supplementing the above Bill.

Sir Basil Blackett's Bill, amending section 59 of the Income Tax Act, was next passed.

#### PROVISION FOR LIGHT HOUSES.

Some discussion ensued on the Bill for consolidation and amending the law relating to the provision, maintenance and control of light houses as passed by the Council of State. The Bill was passed.

#### AMENDMENT OF INDIAN SUCCESSION ACT.

On the motion of Mr. Crerar the Bill amending the Indian Succession Act, 1925, and the Married Women's Property Act, 1874 as passed by the Council of State was passed.

#### PRESIDENCY TOWNS INSOLVENCY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Bill amending the Presidency Towns Insolvency Act, 1909, was passed without discussion in the form it came from the Council of State.

#### CANTONMENTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The House then passed the Bill amending the Cantonments Act, 1924, which removed certain defects brought to light since the passing of the Act.

#### INDIAN EMIGRATION ACT AMENDING BILL.

On the motion of Mr. A. R. Dalal the House took into consideration the Bill amending the Indian Emigration Act for giving effect to an international labour convention.

Mr. Joshi moved the amendment that a ship carrying ten emigrants be defined as an emigrant ship. This power should not be left to the Government of India whose policy was ever changing. The amendment was lost.

Another amendment by Mr. Joshi providing that the provisions of the Act be extended to Malay and Ceylon ports was lost. The Bill was then passed.

#### CENSORSHIP OF CINEMATOGRAPH FILMS.

Mr. Crerar moved:—

'This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he be pleased to appoint a Committee to examine and report on the system of censorship of films in India and to consider whether it is desirable that any steps should be taken to encourage the exhibition of films produced within the British Empire generally and the production and exhibition of Indian films in particular.'

Mr. Crerar said he would have risen with diffidence if he had not had a very strong and convicting case. The matter had been brought very strongly to the notice of the Government. The leader of the Congress party in the other House had moved a resolution on the subject. For good or for evil the cinema was now operating on the society and a very large section of the public were influenced by it. Its powers surpassed those of the press, the platform or even the pulpit. Regarding the dissemination of ideas it was not only a great force but a great power and its operation must be regulated. Censorship in any form was an extremely difficult and delicate task, particularly in respect of the cinema.

He described the existing machinery of the provincial boards of censors, but while the existing machinery was not inadequate the time had arrived to find out the most convenient method of applying the machinery. It was very difficult to establish universally applicable standards. The European community and also Indian opinion felt that certain American films represented western life in an undesirable light. Then there was the provincial point of view. A film regarding the Buddha which was exhibited in Bombay, Calcutta and elsewhere without causing any resentment was resented strongly in Burma. Then, again, the reasonable standard observed in a city like Bombay might not be acceptable to less sophisticated people in United Provinces.

In this connection he made a practical suggestion that all the objections taken by private persons be communicated to the board of censors specifying the parti-

cular phase of the film objected to. It was suggested in some quarters that control should be strict officially. If there was to be any change he would bring it before the House for necessary legislation. He made it clear that he did not endorse the criticisms of the working of the boards of censors who he thought, had on the whole done their work extremely well and set up sound and practical standard. The time had however come to overhaul the machinery.

The second part of his resolution related to the industry as distinct from the question of censorship. The Imperial Conference had passed a resolution advising performance for Empire films. Whether they could proceed on these lines of preference, it was premature to say, but this question could very well be examined. In particular, the question of the Indian film industry was one which must engage the serious attention of the House. The film industry in India was in the initial stage. He would welcome a large extension of the manufacture of films in India, as he considered that Indian films, if properly selected and treated, would be more instructive and interesting than some foreign films whose effect was of doubtful character and which they were unanimous in condemning. (Applause). This enquiry committee could advise means to put this nascent industry on a sound footing; and thereby be of great service not only from an industrial point of view but also from the point of view of instruction and healthy amusement. The committee would consist of five members with Dewan Bahadur T. Rangachariar, ex-deputy President of the House, as chairman (applause) and one European nonofficial and one Indian non-official and two officials. There would thus be three Indians on the Committee. Official members were needed to help the committee in the extremely complex task of going through the voluminous correspondence and extricating the issues. The speaker had been closely connected with this question first for the past nine years and had seen the question first from the point of view of a Local Government and now from the point of view of the Government of India. He was convinced that they had now reached a stage where the ordinary method of examining the question should be examined by the legislature and the executive and repealed by some other machinery and that some advance must be made on the present position by appointing a committee to consider the whole problem. (Applause).

#### MR. DURAISWAMI IYENGAR'S AMENDMENT.

Mr. Duraiswami Iyengar moved an amendment that the committee should (a) examine and report on the system of censorship of films in India, (b) examine and report on the kind of films now exhibited in various theatres, (c) suggest legislative measures to be adopted for preventing exhibiting of films having demoralising effect, and (d) consider and report on the desirability of preventing religion being dragged into films of cinematograph.

Mr. Duraiswami Iyengar asked why partiality was shown to British Empire films. If any film was not calculated to exaggerate the evils of one country and virtues of another he did not see any reason for its exclusion. He referred to Miss Mayo's book, *Mother India*, and said that the authoress was financed by various people to injure the feelings of India. No action was taken by the Government to stop the circulation of that book in the Empire. He foresaw a film being prepared from that book and hoped the Government would take action to stop that. Government always appointed committees beforehand and got the Assembly's assent as a formal matter. The proposed committee did not seem to have majority of Indians. He asked whether one more Indian could be added. The Committee must be appointed immediately and must carefully consider what kind of films should be exhibited.

#### LABOUR TROUBLE AT KHARAGPUR.

Mr. B. Das had just begun when the clock struck 4 and Mr. ACHARYA moved the adjournment motion over the situation at Kharagpur. He declared the history of the trouble there, ever since the proposals for retrenchment were mooted and said retrenchment was only a plea for sending out a large number of workers and give work to private contractors and foreign manufacturers. One officer in an interview had denied that there was any intention on the part of the railway authorities to victimize them. The labour union had throughout co-operated with the authorities in seeing that some of the labourers voluntarily resigned. There was a large amount of repair work to be done and the director of wagon exchange himself had complained that this was not done. Why then should the authorities have, in the name of retrenchment, sent out so many

men without proper notice. He did not want to blame the Railway Board or any one.

*The President*.—Then you should not have brought this censure motion on the Government of India. If you want you can withdraw it.

*Mr. Acharya*.—I say these men should not have been sent out and I say that the situation there is very serious.

*Mr. JOSHI* said that there was a feeling among the workmen that the proposal for retrenchment were a direct act of victimization in consequence of the last strike and that they were intended to do away with such a number of men as would reduce labour troubles. If the Government had accepted the policy of protecting Indian Industries then the Government should have got work done in their own workshops, instead of handing a good portion to private contractors and foreign manufacturers which certainly could not in any case be cheaper. The proposals for retrenchment could not therefore, be justified on the ground of economy. The Government as the trustee of the working classes had a duty towards the men at Kharagpur. The Industries and labour department knew that some branches under it were over-staffed but did they send away the surplus men *en bloc*? But they were privileged classes and not working classes. No wonder that when one-fourth of the men were sent out the remainder of them stood by them. The spirit should be appreciated by Government. If there was a lock-out and a strike the responsibility for these lay on the railway authorities.

*Mr. GOSWAMI* declared that Sir T. B. Wynne had ordered this reduction as a measure of victimization. He remarked that after Diwan Chamanlal's experience yesterday he was nervous about the relevancy of his remarks.

*The President*.—Does the hon. member realize he is making an insinuation?

*Mr. Chamanlal*.—May I ask whether the hon. member is not within his right to refer to it?

*The President*.—No, he is not. (Applause)

*Mr. Chamanlal*.—May I know under what rules and regulations?

*The President*.—Order, order.

*Mr. Goswami*.—I feel so unnerved by your rulings of yesterday that it is extremely difficult to keep within the limits prescribed.

*The President*.—The hon. member is entitled to put in a substantive motion of vote of censure on the Chair, but is not entitled to question a ruling of the Chair (Applause.)

*Mr. Goswami* ended by calling attention to the Kharagpur affair.

*Mr. Jogiah* endorsed generally Mr. Joshi's observations. He was not surprised that the workers had resorted to passive resistance and he advocated the appointment of a conciliation board.

*Lala Lajpat Rai* mentioned that in England unemployment does were granted Reduction was not true economy and Government should relieve suffering.

*Sir George RAINY* said the reduction in the staff of the railway workshops had been necessitated by four factors—need for economy in railway expenses, introduction of modern machinery reducing the need for manual labour, improvement in repair methods and the war arrears of work having disappeared. The Railway Board examined the proposals of the agent of the B. N. Railway very carefully and when they applied the test of other railway workshops they found that the reduction was justified even on a larger scale than that proposed by the agent. For instance in the N. W. Railway 136 locomotives required 6,336 men, while in the B. N. Railway 739 locomotives had 5,756 men. Similarly, reduction was justified in other departments. Working on the N. W. Railway standard they should have in the B. N. Railway Workshops only 7,000 men while even after the reduction they would have 9,600 men. Of the men reduced 800 had been absorbed by ordinary vacancies and casualties, while of the 1,300 there were 300 superannuated men. Thus only 1,000 men were effected. As for the supervising staff the Raven Committee had recommended an increase rather than reduction. *Mr. Joshi* had asked whether the officials would retire without proportionate pension. The speaker's view eight years ago was in favour of a provident fund, so that they could turn him out any time they liked (laughter), and a provident scheme applied to about 600 of those reduced. Thus these men were not being thrown upon the world without any means, but would have fairly substantial amounts to their credit. Under the circumstances the Government of India could not make the B. N. Railway refrain from discharging the men, but he promised to give consideration to Mr.

Joshi's suggestion that in future when reduction was found necessary it should be done by gradual absorption in vacancies rather than by simultaneous discharge and this would also ensure that larger work was done at the workshops than would otherwise be necessary. As regards private contract work, he would leave Mr. Joshi to find the matter out with the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

Continuing, Sir George said that as regards the correspondence quoted by the mover and supposed to have passed between the agent of the B. N. Railway and the managing director in London he could not take notice of a document placed before them in that way. He did not, however, suggest that Mr. Acharya had done any wrong in quoting it. He emphatically denied on behalf of the Government and the Railway the charge of victimization.

Mr. B. Das pleaded for consideration for men in distress and asked Sir George Rainy to pay a personal visit to Kharagpur.

Diwan Chamanlal remarked that the letter of Sir T. R. Wynne quoted to the House showed that the intention was to get rid of those who had gone on strike. He read another letter which showed that by placing a contract with private firms the Railway could get rid of the workmen. Was not this an intention to victimize the workmen?

Pandit Malaviya suggested a committee of enquiry from the Assembly or an outside agency to remove the sense of injustice.

The adjournment motion was put and carried by 44 votes against 37. The House then adjourned.

#### SOCIETIES' REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the 15th SEPTEMBER the business commenced with the acceptance by the Assembly of the motion of Mr. Kelkar that the Bill amending the Societies' Registration Act with a view to include political bodies within the scope of the Act, as amended by the Council of State, be passed.

#### BILL TO REGULATE MARRIAGES OF HINDU CHILDREN.

Rai Sahib Harbilas SARDA then moved the consideration of his Bill to regulate marriages of children amongst the Hindus by prohibiting marriages of girls below the age of 12 and of boys below the age of 15.

Mr. Sarda said that *Mum* had laid down that a girl could not be married till three years after the age of puberty; so according to this Hindu scripture marriage should not take place somewhere before the age of 16. His Bill was not opposed to any religious doctrine. He quoted from various census reports to show that the number of widows and child mortality had gradually increased. This was due primarily to child marriage. If India was to make any advance and come in line with other civilized countries of the world, it was necessary that the social evil of child marriage be immediately stopped. If this were not eradicated Indians would not have sufficient strength to fight for Swaraj. As regards the question of setting up a machinery for enforcing this law, he said the district magistrate was the right person to do this. He referred to similar measures having been adopted by the Baroda, Mysore and Bharatpur states. Even China had prohibited by law the marriage of girls under the age of 16. At question time in the Assembly, in 1921, the Government had said that the initiative for legislation in this direction must come from the non-official side of the House. Since this had been done he expected the full support of the Government. (Applause from all sides of the House.)

Kumar Ganganand SINHA, in moving that the Bill be referred to a select committee, congratulated the author of the Bill for bringing forward the measure at the right time and at the right place. He declared that child marriage had been introduced into Hindu society only recently, and it had no religious sanction behind it. He quoted statistics to show that, in spite of various reforms, early marriage was on the increase. He did not object to the minimum age-limit of girls at 11 but was opposed to the boys' age limit. He opined that it must be fixed at 18, because it was then that a boy reached the age of discretion.

Sir Purshotamdas THAKURIAS said that while the marriageable age had been going up steadily the present position was still very unsatisfactory and it was high time to bring in legislation to effectively put a stop to the practice. He did not wish to trace the history of how they had gone down to offering babies in marriage, but it was unfortunate that certain sections of Hindus mixed this question with religion. It was the utmost humiliation that there were fanatic Hindu

fathers who sacrificed their girls by marrying them early, knowing full well the ravages caused in this country by diseases and epidemics. Some Indian states had introduced measures of reform in this direction. A person who mixed up this question with religion was either fit for being locked up in a lunatic asylum or had some vested interest (applause), but while he would advocate the reform he also would press that the step be taken cautiously but firmly, and for that reason he was for circulation of the measure so that in the next session, the House passed it into law in the form of a satisfactory measure.

Mr. CRERAR, Home Member, moved that the Bill be circulated for eliciting opinion thereon. He appreciated the zeal, earnestness and sincerity of the mover which had caused a deep impression on the House. No one disputed the evil and its ramifications and it was a great problem which demanded solution. So far as the Bill expressed the principle that one of the various methods of approaching this problem was by means of legislation of a civil character, the mover had sympathy with it. Real progress would depend upon the support of enlightened public opinion. A great responsibility rested upon the Government and the Legislature to do all they could to promote rapid development of public opinion on these lines. They had, as a matter of fact, undertaken penal legislation on the subject of the age of consent. The Government's responsibility was a very heavy one, as the measure would undoubtedly infringe very deeply upon the religious ideas and social customs of a considerable section of the population. That being so, all legitimate opinion should be carefully and fairly ascertained.

Lala LAJPAT RAI declared that the Government was responsible for retarding their progress in political, economic and social measures by taking cautious steps. Hindus had always been changing their social laws and he repudiated any suggestion that religion had anything to do with the age of marriage. At any time, and at any stage, people would be found to oppose reform. The only test the Government should apply was whether the measure was the right one. As for public opinion, did the Government ever care for it? (Laughter.) Why not leave the matter to the Hindu members of the House? (Applause.) Mr. Crerar's motion would lead to an indefinite postponement. He supported Kumar Ganganand's proposal for a select committee. 'If I had my way, I would raise the age of girls to 16 at least. All evil customs would have been stamped out long ago if we had legislative power in our hand. A certain amount of coercion must be used in this matter. Hindus as a whole have begun to realize the evils of child marriage. But in condemning this custom I should not be understood to mean that we in India have an extra dose of sin. Every country has social evils in one form or another.'

Mr. JAYAKAR supported the proposal for a select committee. This was, he said, one of those occasions which applied the test whether the Government was national in temperament. The real weakness of the British Government in India was found on such occasions when they adopted an attitude of ignorance. Judge the question from your notions of right and wrong and if you have the support of an enlightened community go ahead with reform, for a certain amount of coercion is inevitable. Because certain Hindus would oppose the measure, do not be frightened. And as for caution, is it necessary to observe caution to find out whether a boy or girl should at the age of 12 be in the hockey field or the nursery or on the married bed? The house is on fire. Will you observe caution to find whether public opinion wishes to extinguish it? I think this cry of caution is misplaced on question of this character. After 12 years, an Englishman in the I. M. S. is entitled to a gratuity of Rs. 37,000. Was Indian opinion consulted on that point? (Applause.)

Mr. Aney objected to that provision of the Bill which made the marriage ceremonies of children *null and void*. He cautioned them against interfering with sacred customs and favoured the imposition of punishment for delinquents. He, therefore, favoured the circulation of the Bill.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar strongly supported the select committee motion and urged the official benches to at least remain neutral if they could not support the motion for the Bill being referred to select committee. He claimed he knew the country very well and emphasized that public opinion had considerably changed in the matter. The time had come for a man-made custom to be altered by the needs of the situation. Even to-day the majority of orthodox, high class people, including Brahmins, married their girls after puberty without any fear of ostracism. He



agreed with Lala Lajpat Rai that the existing evils of society were due to the disturbed state of society. When the legislators had made so many changes in the Hindu law relating to personal rights, why should they hesitate to place on the statute book this much-needed reform which would help to promote the growth of the Hindu society and make it more fit for Swaraj ?

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, while wholeheartedly supporting the principle of the Bill, urged the Assembly not to allow zeal to outrun discretion. He disagreed with Mr. Iyengar in his views and also claimed to know the country as much as Mr. Iyengar and pointed out that the passing of the Bill would not bring about such a change in the country as would avoid such early marriages. Sufficient time must elapse before the idea behind the legislation went down to the masses.

Continuing, the Pandit said that officials should exercise their own individual responsibility and vote for reference to public opinion.

Mr. M. K. Acharya, who rose amidst applause, supported the select committee motion, because this committee would not sit for five months to come, and meanwhile he requested the Government to cooperate with nonofficials in obtaining opinion from the various provinces, opinion which might enable the select committee in coming to right judgment. He feared that the Bill, as it was, might not elicit favourable opinion and for that matter he would welcome the amendment. Hindu society would not object to the fixing of marriageable age for boys and girls.

Mr. Amarnath Dutt opposed the entire Bill failing which he favoured circulation.

The House divided and by 56 votes against 51 decided amidst applause against circulation of the Bill. The motion for select committee was then carried without a division, Mr. Tomkinson alone shouting 'no'. The Assembly then adjourned.

### Insult to Religion Bill

On the 16th SEPTEMBER there was a large number of persons in the visitors' galleries, including Mr. Justice Dalip Singh, when the Assembly met to take into consideration the Bill to amend the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure to penalize scurrilous writings, as reported by the select committee.

Mr. James CRERAR, in moving the consideration of the motion, said the principle of the Bill had been discussed at length and accepted by the House. The select committee had thoroughly examined and redrafted the Bill in order to meet the wishes of those who wished that *bona fide* criticism of religions be not penalized. A new section had been added and he hoped this would satisfy all.

Mr. Rangaswami IYENGAR opposed the Bill, as he held that no case had been made out for legislation. He was aware that the select committee had removed the objectionable features of the Bill and that the party leaders had supported its principle. 'I feel, Sir, the elementary right of freedom of speech and of opinion is being challenged. The House may not be in a mood to listen to me, but one day it will regret the mistake.' (Applause.) They were now adding to the catalogue of the repressive measures, in spite of the existence of the sweeping provisions of sections 153-A and 124-A. He was as keen as any one to punish scurrilous writings, but the ordinary law of the land was sufficient. He was aware that some doubts had been cast by a *bona fide* judgment given in a case; but then the remedy was to remove the doubts in the law and not create a new offence. If the purpose was to prevent writings which had a tendency to disturb the peace and excite violence, let them make that clear in the section itself. The law of sedition and the law of excitement to communal hatred were enough for the purpose. The select committee had done their best to provide safeguards, but the remedy lay really in the creation of public opinion to put down such writings.

Mr. KELKAR supported the motion, though his mind rebelled against the creation of a new offence. They must, said he, hedge it round with necessary safeguards. There were three categories of writers. Firstly, those willing to wound but afraid to strike. They were like a furnace which consumed its own smoke and should be left alone. Secondly, those willing to wound and not afraid to strike and they must be penalized by law. Thirdly, those willing to strike but unwilling to wound. These required protection. Of these the malicious coward was his own sentinel, while the malicious man of action his own accuser. It was the honest, benevolent, but frank critic who required protection. Criticism had been a great engine of progress and must be left to do its duty. The educative operation of the law was

more negative than positive. The following classes of writers must be protected: the sly sceptic; the diligent sociologist who accurately notes down data for generalizations and even vulgar details; the cold rationalist who by the trumpet blast of reason makes the walls of authority fall; the absent-minded philosopher (laughter); the mischievous but kindly humourist; and even the satirist.

Continuing, Mr. Kelkar said this was not the first time that problems of social and religious controversy were being tackled. Every age had its own critics who achieved the common purpose of reform and regeneration.

Sir Zulfikar Ali KHAN confessed that he did not understand the philosophical speech of Mr. Kelkar. He was afraid that the members sitting in the serene atmosphere of this chamber did not realize the tragedies that were being enacted outside. The atmosphere not only in the Punjab but in the whole of India was surcharged and once passions were let loose they were not easy to control. In such an atmosphere some unknown person might either by speech or by writing grossly insult religion, maliciously attributing motives for the conduct of the founders of religions. This obscure man thus becomes the cause of a great tragedy. Why should such men enjoy the liberty of speech or writing?

*Voices.*—Not such men.

*Nasir Zulfikar Ali.*—I say we shall be held responsible to the posterity if we do not pass this legislation which errs on the side of leniency. I am not speaking as a Muslim when I say this, but as an Indian who will condemn as much an attack by a Muslim on another religion. I further wish that the offence should not be bailable, for the free movement of this person will be a danger to society. I appeal to my colleagues in the name of progress and civilization not to consider this measure in a spirit of levity and controversy, but to treat it as necessary for the progress of the country and for repressing those writings which are doing so much harm to the country. (Applause.)

Mr. K. C. ROY opposed the motion of the Home Member (Applause.) He agreed with Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan that circumstances had arisen demanding some legislation, but the communities primarily and the Government secondarily were responsible for the situation. The bill added a new offence to the Penal Code. They had already provided against the creation of hatred between classes, then they had provided to deal with hatred against Government, and they were now asked to legislate against hatred of religion. It was neither a Hindu nor Mahomedan bill, it was a piece of repressive legislation which would serve no useful purpose whatever. The bill was inopportune. It was not in consonance with the spirit of religious toleration which had been the policy of British statesmen, and it was a stigma on the Indian press. He had heard the other day party leaders rising up from their seats and showering encomium on Government for having brought forward this measure. Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar had said the bill was long overdue. Perhaps, Mr. Iyengar was speaking in the terms of the Unity Conference. But there was no such law demanded for the last so many years. Why then was it found necessary by that great lawyer and eminent jurist from Madras? Mr. Jayakar had welcomed the bill as a response to the call of the country. Mr. Roy claimed to be in touch with the political events in India, but he did not find the country asking for this legislation. The demand came from a handful of men in the Punjab, perhaps patriotic; but the inner working came from those who were responsible for communal disturbances in northern India. The proper treatment for them was not this bill, but action under the Deportation Act and the Criminal Law Amendment Act already on the statute book. If these two measures had been resorted to by Government from time to time against the real mischief-makers in the Punjab and the United Provinces there would have been no communal troubles and no need for this unjust piece of legislation before the House. Then again Lala Lajpat Rai had welcomed the bill but speaking a few days ago he had refused to support another bill which came from the Government side, because both sides of the House were diametrically opposed to each other. How then did he find support for this bill, more drastic than that bill? Let him reconcile his views. Mr. Roy asserted that the bill was inopportune, because it would reduce the chances of that atmosphere for which Lord Irwin pleaded the other day. The Viceroy did not want to deal with only the symptoms, as this bill attempted, but with the root of the disease.

Continuing Mr. Roy quoted from the speech of Mr. Craik in the Punjab Council, relating to communal disturbances. Mr. Craik had stated that more than half the

number of newspapers in the Punjab had dummy editors. In one case the editor was one who had confessed he had forged currency notes and escaped by giving away his companions. Another editor had in turn been a barber, a syce and an ex-convict. Did this bill punish the real offenders? Mr. Roy emphatically answered in the negative. A Punjab official who had a great deal of experience in regard to the communal situation in the Punjab told Mr. Roy this morning that the bill as originally drafted was very little, but now it was nothing. This bill, therefore, would serve no useful purpose. The bill put a premium on bigotry and intolerance and would hamper the good work done by reformers European, Hindu and Muslim. Let Mr. Crerar come with a comprehensive measure dealing with the real offenders. Then he would support it.

Mr. BELVI said this bill would not only muzzle the press of the country, but would also stop the expression of honest opinion by scholars and historians. The law as it now stood was quite sufficient. Had Government stopped mischievous writings and speeches in the early stages they would not have found the present atmosphere in the country, and need for any legislation would not have been felt. Government now wanted to cover their past sins by passing this measure. If the bill was passed Government would use it as an instrument showing partiality to one community against the other. He did not think a measure of this kind would allay the feelings in the country. He referred to a pamphlet published by a Khoja where he had criticised the teachings of the head of his own community, namely his Highness the Aga Khan. Were such writings to be considered as objectionable under this? Referring to the provisions of the bill he said the punishment provided by the bill was quite adequate. A severe sentence did not necessarily mean suppression of crime. Public men like Mr. K. C. Roy, Mr. Kelkar, Mr. N. C. Chunder, Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar (members of the select committee), most of whom were press representatives, were against the bill. If a Muslim journalist were on the select committee he would also have agreed with them. There was strong opinion against the bill in certain section of the press. He would, therefore, urge circulation of the bill for eliciting public opinion. They would lose nothing by deferring the enactment till 1928.

Maulvi Mohammad YAKUB regretted that they had to stop the freedom of pen and speech. If after one century of British rule in India they had to pass such legislation he could neither congratulate the people nor the Government. He however hoped that when the state of affairs in the country permitted and the level of civilisation was raised, this measure would be removed from the statute book. He did not claim that the bill as emerged from the select committee was free from defects; but the necessity for such a measure having been established he would support the motion of the Home Member.

Mr. Amarnath DUTT opposed the Bill which was the outcome of the Government's favourite wife policy of pleasing the Mahomedans who asked for it. He criticised the conduct of those Mahomedans who went to the length of demanding the resignation of a judge of the High Court who gave expression to his view of the law as he understood it. (*Mr. Nogy.*—Shame.) He urged the House not to succumb to the unscrupulous forces round the Bill.

Mr. SHERWANl was strongly opposed to the Bill, because even as it stood it was more capable of mischief than protection and it would encourage rather than discourage fanaticism. He was also surprised to see that the demand for the legislation came from Mahomedans only. He told his co-religionists that their prophet was a historical personage and had living history behind him, and did not require protection at the hands of the Legislature. It was wrong on the part of Mahomedans to ask for the resignation of Justice Duleep Singh or for non-Mahomedans to have made him a hero. He (the speaker) could not congratulate himself on having to cooperate with Government to protect his own religion. But although he was vehemently opposed to the Bill, yet speaking as a representative of his constituency he had a mandate to obey. He would not oppose the motion. (*Cries:* Oh) He did not want the Bill to be delayed because delay would add to the mischief caused by the Bill.

Raja Ghaznafar Ali KHAN said it was wrong to say that since the *Rangila Rasul* judgment was overruled by the *Risala Vartman* case there was no necessity of this Bill. In section 153, Cr. P. C. the prosecution had to prove that the writing had really created enmity between communities. This was very difficult to prove, although the religious feelings of community might have been severely hurt. He was in favour of freedom of the

press, but if that freedom was abused it was his duty to cooperate with Government to restrict the press from taking undue advantage of its freedom. Every criminal law could be misapplied by Government if they so wished. It did not, therefore, follow that all laws must be removed from the statute.

The motion of Mr. Belvi for circulation of the Bill was lost and the motion for consideration was adopted.

#### AMENDMENTS TO CLAUSES.

A large number of amendments were moved by non-officials none of which was carried. Mr. Prakasam moved an amendment explaining the operative clause that it should not amount to an offence within the meaning of the section for criticism if the criticism offered by any body on any religion or religious beliefs of a particular class was *bona fide* with a view to removing false notion based on superstitious or pernicious customs which were foreign to true religion or with a view to preventing forcible conversions or reconversions from one religion or faith or belief to another.

Mr. Crerar did not reply to this, but when the motion was put the result was challenged and the motion was defeated by 57 votes to 10.

Mr. M. K. Acharya next raised the question of proscribing all books, pamphlets or other publications calculated to insult religious feelings of any class of his Majesty's subjects, if published outside India, and seizing and destroying them by order of the magistrate within whose jurisdiction the publication took place if published within India.

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar objected to this amendment as being beyond the scope of the Bill itself, as it added a new offence which was not contemplated in the Bill.

The President, however, gave M. Acharya chance who said that this amendment was necessary to prevent such scurrilous writings as Miss Mayo's book from entering India.

Mr. Crerar explained that this offence was already in the Bill.

The remaining amendments numbered over ten, and as some of the members were anxious to move their amendments, the House was adjourned.

On the 19th SEPTEMBER Pandit Thakurdas Bhargava resuming the debate in a speech lasting about half an hour urged that the power of prosecution should not be given to Government because their past conduct had not been impartial. This power would further strengthen the hands of the Government into showing preference to the Muslim community. He instanced the *Rangila Rasul* case and the agitation after the judgment of Mr. Justice Dalip Singh.

In spite of repeated reminders from the Chair to confine himself to the substance of the amendment, Pandit Thakurdas managed to refer to other cases as well. He asserted that Government did not raise their little finger when Christians and Mahomedans had been vilifying the Hindu religion but when the Mahomedan religion had been insulted there was at once this Bill.

After Mr. Thakurdas had spoken, Sir Abdul Qayum rose. He first of all referred to the *Rangila Rasul* case, whereupon the President ruled out all references to this case. Sir Abdul Qayum, proceeding, opposed the amendment.

Mr. Crerar pointed out that the power to prosecute was fully considered by the select committee which left it in the Government for obvious reasons. It meant no encroachment on the liberty of a subject as argued by Pandit Thakurdas Bhargava.

The amendment was negatived by 70 votes to 18.

#### MR. ABDUL HAYE'S AMENDMENT.

Next came the most important amendment, moved by Mr. Abdul Haye, to make the offence non-bailable. He said there was ample provision in the existing law under section 497 to release a man on bail. The provisions of that section had been enlarged and widely used in criminal courts, but this offence would be tried by a chief presidency magistrate or a sessions judge. All offences tried by sessions judges were non-bailable. He would be offending the Criminal Procedure Code to make this offence against religion bailable. The House should not be under the impression that a local Government would be unwarranted.

Mr. Jayakar opposed the amendment because it would make the Bill more drastic than was required by the needs of the situation. In a majority of cases an offender would be some person connected with a newspaper or press or some

organization, and even if he absconded he would not obliterate his organization. Secondly, a fanatic was likely to be a courageous man and therefore not likely to tamper with evidence. The offender had to prove that he had no deliberate or malicious intention to insult religion in order to help his vakil. It was not necessary that the accused must be outside the prison house.

The amendment to make the offence non-bailable was carried by 54 votes against 80.

Mr. Neogy moved that the Act should remain in force till the 31st of December, 1930. He referred to the official move to connect the Reforms with communal troubles as an argument against further reforms. He alluded to the speeches of unofficals from other provinces to show the justifiable fear that the Bill might be used in order to support one community as against another. He quoted from a recent judgment of the district magistrate of Barisal extracts to show that the Musalman community there being large should be supported on the ground that it being less educated, if once got out of control, would create trouble. The treatment meted out to the editor of *Forward*, Mr. Chakravarti, for merely reproducing what was contained in pamphlet was surely open to exception. The question was whether a Government which had behaved in this manner should be entrusted with this power of prosecution for longer than three years when perhaps the situation might not be such as to require the continuance of the law on the statute book.

Mr. Crear said he had nothing whatever to do with the *obiter dicta* of the district magistrate of Barisal. The Bill was intended to put right a legal principle. That principle was a sound one and had been twice affirmed by the Assembly. The Assembly must show the courage of its conviction and reject the amendment.

This amendment was lost by 32 votes against 49.

All the amendments having been disposed of, the Bill, as amended, was then put for final passage.

A motion that the Bill as amended be passed was approved by 61 votes against 26.

After the Bill against attacks on religion had been passed, the Assembly made rapid progress with the Government bills placed before it.

#### ADEN CIVIL AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the motion of Sir Denys Bray, the Aden Civil and Criminal Justice Act (1864) Amendment Bill as passed by the Council of State was passed without alteration, the Foreign secretary pointing out that the Aden solution now arrived at was really that which was considered by and which met with the warm commendation of the Inchcape Committee.

#### INLAND BONDED WAREHOUSES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Sir Basil Blackett introduced the Bill amending the Inland Bonded Warehouses Act, 1896, intended to regularise certain existing practices.

#### INDIAN DIVORCE BILL.

On the motion of Mr. Crear the Indian Divorce Bill was passed without discussion.

#### ASSAM LABOUR AND EMIGRATION BILL.

Sir B. N. Mitra moved for consideration of the Assam Labour and Emigration Bill as passed by the Council of State. Mr. Joshi urged that the whole Act should be amended afterwards. The Bill was then passed.

#### SEAMEN'S ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT.

Sir George Rainy moved that the question of ratification of draft conventions concerning seamen's articles of agreement and repatriation of seamen adopted by the general conference of the International Labour Organisation of the League of Nations at its ninth session from the 7th. to 24th June, 1916, should be considered at a later date when the amendments necessary to bring the existing law into conformity with these draft conventions had been farther examined in consultation with the parties interested.

Sir George explained that 18 months would elapse on Dec. 24 next and to comply with the provisions of the treaty it was necessary to bring the matter before the Assembly by that date. Legislation by Parliament was necessary before India could

ratify, for the British Merchant Shipping Act was closely connected with that of America and at the present moment it was not possible for the Government to take action.

Mr. Joshi moved an amendment for ratification at this meeting because the Government attitude towards improving the hard lot of Indian seamen was most indifferent.

Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury supported the amendment.  
The amendment was defeated and the resolution carried.

#### REPATRIATION OF MASTERS AND SEAMEN.

On the motion of Sir George Rainy the Assembly agreed to a similar postponement of the question of ratification in respect of repatriation of masters and apprentices and general principles for inspection of conditions of work of seamen.

#### CENSORSHIP OF CINEMA FILMS.

Mr. Crerar's motion for a committee on censorship of cinema films, etc., was under discussion when at the instance of Sir Hari Singh Gour it was postponed in view of the lateness of hour. The President hinted and Mr. Crerar agreed that by this adjournment it was open to Government to appoint the committee. The House then adjourned.

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF 'KHADI' DEPOTS.

On the 20th SEPTEMBER the Assembly met for the final sitting with a very thin non-official attendance.

After interpellations, the President asked the Assembly to resume the discussion on the resolution of Mr. Ram Narayan Singh for starting *khadi* depots in each district. But the resolution was withdrawn.

#### PENSIONS TO POSTAL EMPLOYEES.

Mr. Neogy, on behalf Mr. Jannadas Mehta, who had already left Simla, moved for the revision of the rules and regulations relating to the pensions of employees of the Telegraph department to make them equitable and just, by providing that an employee rendering 21 years' net service shall, on being invalided, be in receipt of half the average pay that an employee rendering 25 years' net service shall receive a retiring pension of five-eighths of the average pay and in addition a bonus of one year's pay and that an employee rendering 30 years' net service five-eighths of the average pay and in addition a bonus of 15 months' pay.

Mr. Neogy withdrew the resolution.

Four other non-official resolutions figured on the agenda. Mr. Thakurdas Bhargava had one for the Indianization of the Railway Board; Mr. Jogiah wanted the Telugu-speaking areas to be formed into one province; Mr. B. C. Roy wanted the creation of a Sugar Board; and Kumar Gangananda Sinha wanted to stop the exportation of sacred objects and Indian antiquities, but all these members withdrew their motions in view of the thin attendance of non-official members.

#### ASSEMBLY MEMBERS' STATUS AND PRIVILEGES.

Moulvi Mahomed Yakub moved for a committee to enquire into the privileges and status of members of the Assembly. He complained that Assembly members had been removed from the warrant of precedence. Members' privileges should be protected in many ways. He quoted the instances of Mr. S. C. Mitter having been prevented from taking his oath while as detainee, and the search of the house of Divan Chaman Lal at Lahore while the member was in Simla attending the Assembly session.

At the instance of Mr. B. Das, the names of Mr. K. C. Neogy, Mr. N. M. Joshi and Col. Crawford were added to the committee.

Mr. Crerar, on behalf of the Government, did not oppose the motion definitely but he did not support it because it was premature to make an enquiry into the question at a time when as a result of the Statutory Commission's enquiry there would be many changes. For the same reasons, the Government could not agree to the inclusion in this committee of members of the Government.

The motion was carried, the Government members remaining neutral.

The Assembly then adjourned *sine die* amidst cheers.

# The Bengal Legislative Council

The August Session of the Bengal Council commenced its session on the 23rd August in the afternoon. His Excellency the Governor, addressing the Council for the first time since taking up office alluded to two outstanding topics of public interest.

Referring to the prisoners detained under the Bengal Ordinance and Regulation III of 1818, the Governor re-affirmed the policy outlined by Sir Alexander Muddiman in the Assembly.

He continued :—“That was a definite statement of policy upon this vexed question pronounced just before I took up my office in Bengal. There has been no change in this policy; and upon that policy I have considered it my duty to proceed. Since that statement was made, after a most careful consideration of the whole situation in all its aspects and after consultation with my Government, I considered that the conditions prevailing in Bengal justified an acceleration of the rate of release; and action was taken accordingly. I find that at the end of March this year, there were in jail 54 persons under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, and 16 under Regulation III. To-day there are 32 under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act and 8 under Regulation III. By the end of March this year, 26 had been released from restraint. To-day, the number stands at 60. Provided no untoward event occurs and the conditions at present prevailing in Bengal continue, and the conduct of these released justify the action taken in their cases, a large number of these now detained would be transferred or released before the end of the year. I shall continue to give my own personal attention to each individual case.”

## THE “NO-CONFIDENCE” MOTION

“I note on the paper, a motion expressing “No-Confidence” in the Ministers. This is a serious resolution, and one which, I am sure, has not been put down without a due consideration of the possible consequences. All the Hon’ble members will appreciate their responsibility on a vote of this kind. My duty is quite clear in the case of any adverse vote. I shall accept the decision of the Council; and it will not be possible for my Ministers to retain their offices. It might be necessary to prorogue the House, in order to enable me to fill their place.

“I feel that I have arrived in India at a moment of exceptional interest. In the ordinary course of events, the Statutory Commission as laid down under the Act of 1919, will start its investigations within the next two years. Their primary duty will appear to be, after investigation, to report upon the results of the working of the Act of 1919 throughout India. And upon that report, will hang decisions of momentous importance to the future government of India. I am hopeful that during the period left before the Commission starts its work, we in Bengal may be able to produce wise and statesman-like legislation, to prove ourselves worthy of the confidence of the British Parliament in our ability to manage our own affairs.”

## OTHER BUSINESS

After question time, Mr. Bidhan Chander Roy, Swarajist, asked for a leave to move the “No-confidence” motion as regards the two Ministers. Leave was granted; and the motion was discussed on the 25th.

On the motion of Sir James Donald, the Council agreed to a loan of Rs. 30½ lakhs for the construction of roadways for vehicular and foot traffic on the Bally Railway Bridge. The Swarajists opposed the motion, but were defeated by 60 votes to 47 votes.

The Hon’ble the Maharaja of Nadia introduced a Bill to make provision for the establishment of Borstal schools for the detention and training of adolescent

offenders. He said Madras was much advanced in this respect, and the school at Tanjore was doing much good to that province. The Swarajists did not oppose the introduction of the Bill.

### Condition of Detenus.

Questions regarding the political detenus, figured largely on this day, Sjt. Subash Chandra Bose being responsible for many of them.

Replying to a question, Mr. Moberly said that the Government were aware of the death of a detenu Shih Shankar Brahmachari of Pabna town. They had received petitions from the afflicted parents for financial help after the death of the detenu; but the Government did not consider that any further grant should be made besides the contribution already made towards the expenses of the "Shradh" ceremony of the deceased.

Mr. Subash Bose: When was the Government aware of the death of the detenu?

Mr. Moberly: I am afraid, I cannot give the exact date, without reference to my file.

Mr. Subash Bose: Will the Hon. Member state the time that lapsed between the death of the detenu and the time when he was made aware of the fact of the detenu's death? Mr. Moberly: I ask for notice.

Mr. Subash: Does not the Government think it their duty to maintain the family when the Government was responsible for his detention in jail where he died? President: It is a matter of opinion. (Swarajists cried out: Shame).

### REASONS FOR TRANSFERS.

In reply to another question regarding the transfer of the Bengal political prisoners outside Bengal, Mr. Moberly said that the reasons for the transfer varied according to the class of the prisoner and according to the circumstances of individual cases; and the Government were not prepared to publish the reasons. Transfer had been made at the instance of the Government of Bengal in the case of convict-prisoners with the previous sanction of the Governor-General in Council; in the case of State prisoners by the issue of revised warrants under Regulation III of 1918 by the Government of India and in the case of detenus by an order passed by the Government of Bengal with the previous sanction of the India Government. The Local Government in whose province the prisoner was confined, was responsible for the treatment of the prisoners. But in the case of State prisoners, instructions for their treatment had to be approved and allowances sanctioned by the India Government. In the case of detenus under the Bengal Ordinance, the allowances were sanctioned by the Bengal Government. The Government were not prepared to publish the names of the prisoners detained outside Bengal, their places of detention and the reasons of their ill-health. The Government were aware of the difficulty experienced by the prisoners in having interviews with their relatives. As regards the facilities for writing letters, so far as the transferred convicts were concerned, the Government of Bengal had no authority to grant them special privileges while they were in jails in other provinces. As regards state prisoners and detenus, the Government were of the opinion that the number of letters generally permissible, namely, four a week in Burma, Bombay and the Punjab and three elsewhere, was sufficient in ordinary circumstances.

### GOVERNMENT'S REFUSAL TO ANSWER QUESTION.

Sjt. J. M. Sen Gupta asked the reason for not disclosing the reason for the transfers.

Mr. Moberly replied that they were not prepared to give reasons for individual cases.

Sjt. Sen Gupta: Will the reason, if stated, be prejudicial to the reputation of the Bengal Government?

Mr. Moberly: I do not understand the question. (Laughter).

Sjt. Subash Bose: Will the member state the reason for not publishing this information?

Mr. Moberly: Because we never publish information regarding individuals. (Jeers from the Swarajist benches).

Sjt. Subash Bose: Will the member state why he is not prepared to make a statement regarding the ill-health of detenus or rather the causes why they are suffering from acute disease.



Mr. Moberly: Because we regard this matter as one between the Government and the members of the family of the detenus.

Sjt. Subash Bose: Do the Government think that the public have no interest in these detenus? (There was no reply).

Mr. Subash Bose asked the President whether he would answer.

The President: I think it is a matter of opinion. The Member cannot be insisted upon to give a reply if he is not willing.

Sjt. Subash Bose: Does the Government think that the publication of the information will be prejudicial to public safety?

The President thought that this was again a matter of opinion.

At this stage Rai H. N. Chaudhuri on a point of order, referred to section 30 of the Council Manual which laid down that questions should be answered in the manner the President might think in his discretion. At any rate, the rule contemplated an answer; and the question must be answered.

The President said that if the question was in order, it must be answered. But in this case, Mr. Bose's question was not in proper form for the simple reason that it was a matter for opinion; and was not a bona fide request for information.

Rai Chaudhuri: Do I understand that your ruling is that even when questions are allowed by you, they may not be answered?

The President: Unless there are reasons of State. I cannot insist on the Hon. Member to give an answer.

Mr. Subash Bose: Are the Government aware that the public take a great deal of interest in the health of the detenus? A. Yes.

At this stage Sir James Donald stated that when Government said that they were not prepared to answer, that was an answer.

Mr. Akhil Dutt: On a point of order. With reference to the answer of Sir Donald, will it be an answer, if he says that he does not choose to answer?

The President: I think it is an answer. (Jeers from Swarajist benches.)

The President: What do the members mean by this? It may be that my ruling is not palatable to them; but still they will have to obey it. I should ask the House not to say that in a fashion not commendable to me.

Mr. Akhil Dutt: Have not members the right to express their disapprobation?

The President: Yes, they have their right; and I will welcome that; I want to be guided by that. But this must be in a fashion commendable to me and to everyone else.

Dr. J. M. Das Gupta: Will you kindly show us the way?

The President: I am not prepared to do that. You ought to know that.

Mr. Subash Bose: Are you aware, Sir, that the legislatures in India, including this House are more tame than the legislatures in free and democratic countries?

The President: Yes; and I would like to see the legislatures full of life. At the same time the legislatures ought to know how to conduct a debate and not be what I should call unseemly in their protests or in their disapprobations.

Mr. Subash Bose: Is the Member aware that a certain person who had obtained permission of the Bengal Government to interview me in the Insein jail, was refused permission by the Burma Government to do so?

Mr. Moberley said that the Government had no information.

Mr. Bose: Am I to understand that the Bengal Government are not aware that the gentleman who had been granted permission was not allowed by the Burma Government to interview me in the Insein jail.

Mr. Moberley said it was not a fact; and the Government had no information whatever.

Mr. Subash Bose asked the Maharaja of Nadia whether he was aware that in no jail in Bengal or Burma where he was detained, were non-official visitors allowed to visit him. The Maharaja of Nadia replied in the negative.

Mr. Subash Bose: Is the Member in charge aware that Kumar Sirish Chandra Nandy, M. L. C., was not allowed to visit the detenus in the Berhampore jail?

The Maharaja of Nadia; I have no file with me; and I cannot answer off-hand.

Mr. Sarat Bose: Is it a fact that Kumar Debendra Lal Khan, a non-official visitor of the Midnapore jail was not allowed to visit detenus; and he resigned in protest. Maharaja of Nadia: I am not aware of that.

Mr. Sarat Bose: Is it a fact that Kumar Debendra Lal Khan, on being refused permission by the Magistrate to see the detenus wrote to the Commissioner of the division, asking for permission and that it was refused.

**Maharaja of Nadia:** I am not aware. The Maharaja added that he was not prepared for this large volley of supplementary questions. He had not the files with him and he could not answer off-hand.

At this stage, the President said he could not allow any more supplementary questions for the simple reason that the Hon. Member was not prepared. This was an exceptional circumstance; and the Hon. Member had said that he did not realise that so many supplementary questions would be put.

**Mr. Das Gupta:** May I request the Hon. Member to issue a statement giving detailed information?

**The President:** The question does not arise. You could have put it to him in a supplementary question; and you have not done in it.

On the 24th AUGUST renewed attack with more vigour was made on the general policy of the Government in regard to the question of the detention and treatment of political prisoners and in particular upon the evasive replies which the Government gave whenever any "inconvenient" question was put to them in connection with this matter. The Hon. Mr. Moberly, in charge of the Political Department, was overwhelmed with a number of supplementary questions that continued for full one hour and he had scarcely any time to think out what he was saying. The result was that the Hon'ble Member found himself in an uncomfortable position.

The first supplementary question put was about the health of Mr. Arun Guha.

**Mr. K. S. Roy asked:** Will the Government state whether it is a fact that Mr. Guha is suffering from boils?

"I want notice", said Mr. Moberly and declined to give the date of the report on Mr. Guha's health and the name of the person who submitted such a report.

**Mr. Subhas Bose asked:** Is the Hon'ble Member of the opinion that a person who had been suffering from boils for the last six months and had at least a dozen operations is in good health?

The President said it was a matter of opinion. The Government admitted that remedies had so far failed to cure Mr. Guha.

**Mr. Sarat Bose asked:** Is the Hon. Mr. Moberley aware that there is a member in this Council who knows that Mr. Guha is not in good health. Is he prepared to contradict that statement?

**Mr. Moberly** replied his information was based on information supplied by the officer in charge.

Putting a supplementary question in connection with the detention of Mr. Hari-kumar Chakravarti outside Bengal under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, **Mr. Subhas Bose asked:** Will the Hon. Member be pleased to state if it is not a fact that the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act does not permit externment of detenues already within the Provinces of Bengal. The President disallowed the question.

**Mr. Subhas Bose** then, as a protest against some evasive replies given by the Hon. Moberly, appealed to the President and said: As a custodian of the rights and privileges of the House, will you allow the Hon'ble Member to evade questions of inconvenient character in this way?

**Mr. J. L. Banerjee said:** Does it depend upon the sweet will of the Hon. Member whether he will give information or not? Is it not a part of his duty to supply information and should you not compel him to do that?

The President said there might be matters on which the Government might refuse to give any information and he did not think power had been given to him to compel a member in charge to give them information.

**Mr. Subhas Bose asked:** Will the foundation of the British Empire shake if the Government publish the report regarding the health of detenues? (Cheers and Jeers.)

In answer to the question the Hon. Moberly pleaded he had no information. He said it was not a matter of convenience but it was a matter of policy that information was withheld from the member of the Council.

**Mr. J. L. Banerjee asked:** Does the Hon'ble Member wish us to understand that the question of comparative weights of certain inoffensive persons is a question of public policy?

**Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta:** May I remind you that in the Assembly the President had often said that that was no answer when some answers had been given by official members and he had asked the members to give proper answers.

The President said it was nothing extraordinary.

Mr. Subhas Bose next asked: Is it not a fact that the object of the Government in transferring detenus was purely vindictive?

The President disallowed the question.

Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta asked: Is Mr. Moberly aware that detention by the Deputy Commissioner of Police in jail has been held by the High Court as illegal? The Government replied it was subsequent to January 1924 when arrests were made.

In reply to another question, the Hon. Member said that a special class of prisoners still existed.

#### OFFICIAL BILLS

The official business was then taken up. The Bengal Borstal Schools Bill and the Calcutta Vehicles Bill to provide for better control of horse-drawn vehicles in Calcutta were passed.

Two other bills, namely, the Land Development Bill and the Mining Settlements Bill were also introduced. The House then adjourned.

### "No-Confidence" Motion Passed

On the 25th AUGUST from an early hour, large crowds had gathered in and around the Town-hall; and were continuously shouting "Bande Mataram," "Allah-o-Akbar" and "Shame, shame" when the Council assembled in the afternoon, to discuss the "No-confidence" motion. All the public galleries were overcrowded. The attendance of members was almost full.

Some of the Mahomedan Members who used to sit on the European and nominated benches, changed their places, and took their seats with the Swarajists on the Opposition benches.

After question time, the "No-Confidence" motions were moved separately but discussed together. The motion of "No-Confidence" in the Hon'ble Mr. B. Chakravarti, Hindu Minister, was carried by 68 votes to 57. The "No-confidence" motion against the Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Ghuznavi, was carried by 66 votes against 62.

The crowd outside the Town-hall had grown to enormous proportions, by the time divisions on the motions of "no-confidence" had been taken. As each result was declared and communicated to the throng outside, it was received with shouts of "Bandemataram" and "Allah-o-Akbar." Some of the Members as they emerged from the hall, were given a tremendous ovation. They addressed the crowd from the stairs of the hall.

#### THE DEBATE

Mr. Bidhan Chandra ROY, the Deputy Leader of the Swarajya Party in the Council, moving the "No-confidence" motion said that it was in the year 1919 that the Indian National Congress had passed a resolution expressing the opinion that the "Reforms were inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing." In explaining the resolution the late Mr. C. R. Das had said that they were not opposed to co-operation, if that helped them to get Swaraj; but that at the same time they were not opposed to obstruction, plain downright obstruction, when that helped them to attain their ideal. That was in 1919. Six years after Mr. Das in his Faridpur speech, had said that the basis of the present Act was distrust of the Ministers, and that there could be no talk of co-operation in an atmosphere of distrust.

Dr. Roy thereafter detailed the conditions laid down by Mr. Das, and said that the attitude of the party had not varied since. It was a most malicious misstatement to say that the Congress had, in general principles and outlook, changed its attitude towards the Reforms, although in actual detail they might have had to vary that methods, according to circumstances.

Mr. Roy said that the provisions of the Act, to his mind, gave the Governor the whole responsibility for the administration of the Transferred Departments. The Imperial Parliament held him accountable for the proper management of the departments. He was expected to choose his own ministers and could dismiss them and control them. The speaker quoted at length from the statements of several ex-Ministers, who had held offices in different provinces and had given evidence before the Muddiman Committee.

Continuing, Dr. Roy said that the Congress party had always held that under such circumstances, an effective Ministry was impossible. Popular Government had not been conferred on the people of the country. The real fact was that no subject had been truly transferred although certain departments had been declared to have been placed under Ministers. Continuing, Dr. Roy said that the Ministers had no effective control over the superior officers of their departments, nor had they any

voice in their selections. That being the position, the members of the Congress held that they could not have any confidence in Ministers who were prepared to accept offices under such conditions. Dr. Roy continued : "We can have no confidence in them if we find that they have not the backing of no majority of the elected members of the council. We can have no confidence in them if we find that in the conduct of affairs they have not shown any great concern for the welfare of those for whom they are responsible. The present Ministry's holding of office is based not on the amount of work they have done for their country and the people ; but on the vague promises of help and support. We can have no confidence in the Ministers when we find that they have to depend on official votes to save themselves from disaster, and are not prepared, by themselves, to secure for the subjects of this vast country, even the elementary right which every citizen in any civilised Government possesses."

The speaker asked : "Where were the Ministers when the motion for the release of political prisoners was moved in the February session ? Did they raise their voices ? We know that they kept to their places. When the demand for the Secret Service money was made did they vote on the popular side ? Mr. Chakravarti as the leader of the now defunct Nationalist Party in the council, had led his party into the Opposition lobby and had voted against the formation of Ministries on three occasions : but had now accepted office without the necessary conditions being complied with by the Government. Mr. Chakravarti had had to vote for a grant of 36 lakhs of the people's money for the Bally Bridge, though he had voted against the same in 1925. He could do so only because he was a creature of the Government, a limb of the bureaucracy, because he could not command any majority among the members of the council and because he did not represent the people at all except that he managed to get into the council by the back-door through a special constituency. Mr. Chakravarti was obviously an honourable man. Would he as an honourable man, tell what steps, if any, he had taken towards the progressive realisation of his ideal. The speaker asked what special facility he had provided for the expansion of Muslim education which he had put in the forefront of his programme.

In spite of its defects, Dr. Roy thought that some good could be achieved by properly working the Constitution. If the Ministers had not the confidence of the people, the Transferred Departments could not be managed. It would rather retard the progress of the constitution. When the Ministers had not a sufficient following and had to depend on individual votes, the result would be demoralising to public life and administration. The first Ministry was not a failure. Sir Surendranath Banerjee worked the constitution with great success. If the Government selected Ministers with no following, the Government was responsible for the constitution not working properly. This mistake could be avoided, if the Government took the advice of the leaders of the people. The Statutory Commission was coming soon ; and they wanted to prove that there should be further advance in Responsible Government. But could that be proved by keeping these two Ministers in office ? They would rather prove that Responsible Government was not suited for India. When the Ministers did not command the confidence of the people, it was not desirable that they should be kept in office.

Mr. J. M. SEN GUPTA, the Leader of the Congress Party in the Council, said that, so far as the motion was concerned, the position of his party was clear ; and he would not tire the House by restating it. For the present, he would put himself in the position of the Mahomedan members who were willing to work out Diarchy for what it was worth ; and thereby, he would convince everybody that if they desired that the Government of the country should be carried on, it must be by people who were above suspicion and distrust and dishonesty and corruption. He asked the members not belonging to his party, to tell him whether in case they found the Minister guilty of scandalous behaviour they would still be prepared to support the Ministry. He asked the Mahomedans not belonging to Sir Abdur Rahim's party to answer the question : "Do you or do you not know that, so far as the Kulkati shooting was concerned, the whole Mahomedan community condemned the shooting and demanded a public enquiry ?" If the answer was in the affirmative, let them then put the question to the Honble Mr. Ghuznavi as to what part he played in the matter. Did he go to the place when the firing took place ? No ; he was receiving an address from the local bodies. But what did Mr. Ghuznavi do ? He put up a rival candidate. (Ironical cheers from the Ministerialists.)

Then, when the question was raised in the floor of the House, what did Mr. Ghuznavi do? He sat tongue-tied. That was the conduct of Mr. Ghuznavi in the matter.

Proceeding, Mr. Sen Gupta said he might now turn his attention to the Mahomedan members of the House who did not belong to his party or to the party of Sir Abdur Rahim. Might he ask them why the Hon. Mr. Ghuznavi had been sitting on the files of the nomination of members to three District Boards not to speak of other municipalities, for the last six months? Had there been ever so much delay in the history of British administration in Bengal in the matter of nomination of members to District boards? Would Mr. Ghuznavi deny the fact that for the last two or three days, he had been going down the lobbies and telling members that if the motion of no-confidence was passed against him he would not be able, it would not be possible for him, to nominate the members recommended by them.

The real fact in not making the nominations was, that he wanted to consolidate his position in the Council Chamber by keeping back the nominations until the motion was voted upon. He knew that without the nominations the district boards could not function. But Mr. Ghuznavi must consolidate his position.

Mr. Sen Gupta emphasised that he was speaking all these, by putting himself in the shoes of the members who wanted to work the Constitution. Let not the members deceive themselves into the belief that because the motion had been brought forward by a Swarajist, therefore it was aimed at Dyarchy. He continued: "But if there were dishonest and corrupt men in office would you not sack them?" If the European members did not vote upon them on this motion, Mr. Sen Gupta said he would come to the conclusion that their object was—and he hoped that they would not blame him for that opinion—their desire to show to the world that Indians were absolutely incompetent to carry on the administration of the country. (Mr. Travers laughingly replied in the negative). If, as a matter of fact, they believed that no good was added to the administration by having the two Ministers in office, could they give any reason why they should not give their votes in favour of the motion? It was late in the day for the European members to say that because the constitutional issue had been raised, they would not vote. A clear duty lay on those who were jealous of the reputation of the fair name of Bengal, to vote solidly for the motion of "no-confidence."

Sir Abdur RAHIM, in supporting the motion of "no-confidence", made the position of his party clear. He said, in spite of being fully conscious of the defects of the present Constitution, they thought no harm could be done, and some good might be achieved if the Constitution was properly worked out. He used the word properly deliberately; for if the Ministers did not enjoy the confidence of the majority of the elected members, the Transferred Departments could not be properly managed; and instead of doing good to the country, the Ministers might retard the progress of the Constitution. If the Ministers depended on the stray votes of individuals, he said then it was demoralising the public life. It would also demoralise the administration when a large section of the elected members, namely, Swarajists, were bent on killing dyarchy. He thought it was difficult, nay, impossible, to carry on the Government under the Act. But, equally there were large sections of the elected members, who believed that in spite of its limitations, the present Constitution was capable of doing good to the country. His Excellency had stated the other day, continued Sir Abdur, that if the motion of "no-confidence" was passed, he would immediately appoint others to the office.

In this connection, Sir Abdur Rahim recalled the working of the Ministry formed with Sir Surendranath Banerjee and said that it was only through his personality that the Ministry was a success in spite of the non-co-operation in the country. But, after him, Ministers were appointed who failed to secure the confidence of the House. In appointing Ministers, the Government should appoint those who commanded a majority in the House.

Referring to the Hon. Mr. Ghuzanavi, Sir Abdur Rahim said he had no personal quarrel with him. His strong point was that, after the Government had declined to accede to the modest demand of the Mahomedans for an enquiry into the Kulkati affair, Mr. Ghuzanavi should have come out of office. He could have impressed upon the Government the necessity of having an independent enquiry. He had not the courage to do the proper thing regarding a matter which had stirred the feelings of the entire Mrhomedan community, and therefore they did not have confidence in him.

Referring to the Hon. Mr. Chakravarti, Sir Abdur Rahim said he had also

no personal quarrel with him. They were old friends ; but on the ground of public policy, the ministers could not be in office.

#### MINISTERS' DEFENCE

The Hon. Mr. GHUZZAVI, in the course of a vigorous speech, defended his action and stated that the vote of "no-confidence" was merely a manoeuvre of a sordid nature in order to satisfy personal grudge and private ambition. He asked the House to seriously consider what would be the effect of this light-hearted pastime, on the future of the province in view of the forthcoming Royal Commission. Proceeding, he said in other countries nobody could have thought of bringing a censure motion on such a flimsy ground. Such a motion would only be raised on a constitutional issue or on a question of public policy. Full political advantage was taken of the Kulkati incident. He said that, in his humble way, he had tried his best to what service he could to God and his country ; for he believed his sacred privilege was to serve God by serving his creatures.

He then referred to the efforts he had made to eradicate cholera and malaria. He remarked that this motion was a political vendetta and nothing else.

Answering the charge that he remained neutral on the question of the release of political prisoners, he said under the rules, the Ministers should not vote against the Government. The only option left was to remain neutral.

Referring to the Statutory Commission he said they must, at the bar of public opinion and before the British Parliament, prove that they were fit for the Reforms by showing their capacity in working out the Reforms. In this connection, he referred to the history of the Irish Free State, and asked the House to profit by it.

Concluding he said : "I stand here and declare that all the time that I held office, I have been guided by one and one consideration only to serve my country to the best of my ability. I do not claim to be infallible. I am conscious of my limitations, but I recognise my duty to serve my country's progress. I recognise I have been inspired by this ideal."

The Hon. Mr. B. CHAKRAVARTY said that he did not wish to make a long speech ; but, as had been stated by Mr. Travers, he pointed out that the position in regard to the Bengal National Bank was still sub-judice. He wished the House to know that he was still indebted to the Imperial Bank and that he stood guarantee for Rs. 43 lakhs to save the Bengal National Bank and the Bengal Luxmi Cotton Mills.

After a stormy debate for more than two hours in which six members, including the mover, spoke for the motion, and five members including the two Ministers, spoke against, closure was applied.

The motion was put to vote, and carried by 66 to 92 votes, amid acclamation.

When the result was announced, the Hon. Mr. B. Chakravarti said he had resigned.

But an objection was raised that before the other motion was voted upon the Hon. Mr. B. Chakravarti could not resign.

Accordingly the President put the motion that the Council had no confidence in Mr. B. Chakravarti to vote ; and it was carried by 68 votes to 55 votes. The Council then adjourned.

On the 26th AUGUST the Hon'ble the Ministers Mr. A. K. Ghuznavi and Mr. B. Chakravarti having tendered their resignations which were accepted by H. E. the Governor, His Excellency ordered the prorogation of the Bengal Legislative Council.

#### The December Session.

The next meeting of the Council, after the announcement of Sir P. C. Mitter and Nawab Musharoff Hossain as Ministers took place on the 13th DECEMBER and terminated on the next day. Only official business was transacted on this day. In spite of Swarajist opposition on the motion of Mr. Marr, Finance Member, excess grants of Rs. 2,081 under General Administration, Rs. 1,483 under Police, Rs. 59,295 under superannuation allowance and pensions, and Rs. 8,989 under stationery and printing, were made by the Council.

On the motion of the Maharaja of Nadia the following clauses were added to the Bengal Borstal School Act, namely, "Subject to the provisions of this Act, the provisions of the Prisons Act of 1894 and the Prisoners Act of 1900, shall apply to the Borstal School established under this Act as if it were a prisoner".

The Council then adjourned.

## UNIVERSITY ACT AMENDMENT.

On the 14th DECEMBER two bills to amend the Indian Universities Act so far it applies to the Calcutta University and the law relating to the Calcutta University were introduced. The object of the bills is to reconstitute the university with a view to free it from the control of the Government. The bills demand an extension of the electorate of the Senate. The bills were circulated to elicit public opinion.

## JUTE EXPORT DUTY.

The Council passed a resolution asking the Bengal Government to approach the Government of India for securing the proceeds of the export duty on jute for Bengal to be utilised for primary education, sanitation and agricultural improvement.

## SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS.

Mr. J. L. Banerjee, a prominent Swarajist, then raised an important question of procedure by stating that under the rules and standing orders, the Government and the Ministers were bound to answer the supplementary questions, for which they had asked for notice. He complained that this practice was never followed. The result was some two hundred supplementary questions that were put at the last session of the Council, and for which members on the Treasury Bench wanted notice, remained unanswered.

The President said that supplementary questions could not be carried over from one session to the next.

Rai Harendranath Choudhury submitted that the supplementary questions put on Tuesday, and for which the Hon'ble Members had asked for notice, should be answered.

The Maharaja of Nadia, Leader of the House, intervening, said that the supplementary questions had been put only the previous day and it was not possible for the Government members to answer them unless they had discussed the matter.

The opposition Benches declared that the rule regarding answers to questions was mandatory as the expression used in the rules was "shall".

Mr. Fazlul Haque: "Will the Hon'ble Members make a frank confession that notice was asked for to shelve the questions?"

The President, after some discussion, said, that instead of prolonging the discussion and wasting time over it, the best course open to him was to make a thorough enquiry into the matter.

Mr. Sarat Bose protested on behalf of his party against the use of the expression "waste of time" when they were discussing important question of procedure.

Next followed a series of questions on the University affair, and an attack on the Education Minister by Mr. Sarat Bose.

The President intervening disallowed the question on the ground that it was not *bona fide*, but more or less a criticism that the Minister had no knowledge of the affairs of his department.

Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta said as to whether the question was *bona fide* or not it was for the member concerned to decide. He submitted that all questions from his party were *bona fide*. His party was entitled to bring out from the Minister of Education, information which they could use for the purpose of showing that the Minister was not fit to hold office.

The President: If I were to allow you to get such information, then every question would be like the motion of "No-confidence."

Mr. Sarat Bose wanted the correspondence between the Department of Education and University to be placed on the table.

The President ultimately disallowed the question.

Then followed certain questions regarding the detenus in Mandalay Jail. Mr. Sarat Bose asked whether the Government were absolutely bankrupt in the matter of information regarding the condition of detenus in the Mandalay Jail.

The Home Member: I do not understand the expression "bankrupt."

Sjt. Subhas Bose again expressed his dissatisfaction regarding the manner in which questions were passed over.

After this the Council stood adjourned *sine die*.

# The Bombay Legislative Council

The second session of the Bombay Legislative Council met at Poona on the 18th JULY, with an unusually big list of interpellations.

## ADEN JUDICIARY BILL.

After question time, the Hon'ble Mr. Watson moved the second reading of the Aden Civil Judicial Administration Bill. Although there had been several administrative changes in connection with Aden, said Mr. Watson, the general control was still in the hands of the Bombay Government. The present Bill dealt mainly with giving the judicial powers of a District Judge to an officer of the Bombay Government who had gone to Aden. He admitted that the Government of India was interested on their withdrawing two important clauses dealing with appeals from Aden to the Bombay High Court; but he asked the House to pass the Bill in its present form. He promised them that a full report of the debate would be sent to the Government of India, to enable them to see how essential the members considered the two clauses which had been dropped. The Bill met with general approval, and was passed after several amendments had been thrown out.

## AGRICULTURISTS' RELIEF ACT.

The House also passed the first reading of the Bill to amend the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act so as to increase the jurisdiction of village munsiffs. Discussion on the second reading had not concluded when the House rose.

## OFFICIAL BILLS.

On the 19th JULY, after question time, the House passed the third reading of the Aden Civil Courts Bill and of the Bill to amend the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act. The Bill to amend the land Revenue Code was postponed.

## LOCAL BOARDS ACT AMENDMENT.

The first reading of the Bill to amend the Bombay Local Boards Act was taken up. The Bill confers on a Collector power to call a meeting for the election of the President, and also enables the president or vice-president to resign office without losing his seat as a member of the Board. Clause four allows, in educational matters, the chairman of the schools board when not himself a member of the district board, or, in his absence, his nominee, or when he is a member of the Board but unable to be present, his nominee, to attend the meetings of district or local boards to give advice in such discussions.

After several amendments had been lost, Mr. Chikodi's amendment substituting the Vice-chairman or Administrative Officer of the school board, for "nominee", was carried. The Minister accepted the amendment and the Council adjourned.

On the 20th JULY the Minister accepted Mr. Deshpande's amendment to delete the portion in Clause VI which empowers local boards to take the necessary measures for the prevention of dangers in the places to which the Factories Act does not apply. The Minister also accepted Mr. Jog's amendment to Clause 11, to publish audit reports in the Government Gazette.

Mr. Mukadam's amendment to charge local cess on a full assessment of Talukdari land, instead of Jumma (60 percent), was carried after a lively debate.

The discussion of the Bill was not over when the Council adjourned.

With regard to the Bombay Municipal Act Amending Bill, the Leader of the House announced that the Government had decided not to proceed with it.

On the 21st JULY the Council passed the third reading of the Local Boards Bill. The last clause of the Bill brings the provisions in the Local Boards Act into harmony with section 50 of the Land Acquisition Act, which says that when land



is acquired by the Government at the request of a Local Board, all the charges incurred by the Government on account of the acquisition, in addition to the compensation awarded under the Act, shall be paid by the Local Board.

#### IMPROVEMENT TRUST BILL.

There was a lively discussion, over the motion of Sir Gulam Hussein Hidayatullah, for the first reading of the Bill to amend the Bombay City Improvement Trust Transfer Act.

The new clause in the Improvement Trust Bill intends to give effect to the resolution of the Board of Trustees of the Bombay City Improvement Trust that no fees be paid in respect of meetings to the Committee. Another clause provides that, after the tribunal of appeal ceases to function, under Improvement Transfer Trust Act, all references pending before the tribunal of appeal shall be transferred to the High Court on its original side.

Mr. Nariman, Swarajist, amidst cheers from the Government Benches, rose to support the motion. He declared that, from the modern stand point of public service, the principle of payment of fees for attending meetings of a public body was pernicious. After Sir Gulam Hussein had replied, the Bill passed the first reading.

In the course of the second reading of the Bill, Sir Vasant Dabolkar, nominated member, who is opposed to the new clause, moved an amendment referring the Bill to a Select Committee. He pointed out that the Board had recently rescinded its previous resolution. He asked that if the members of the Standing Committees of the Corporation and Port Trust were paid why the members of the Improvement Trust Board should not be. Sir Vasant's amendment was finally defeated. After two more amendments had been thrown out, the Bill was passed.

#### REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

On the 22nd JULY among the Government Bills discussed was one to amend the Indian Registration Act, which was introduced by the Excise Minister.

Explaining the object of the Bill, the Minister said that, among other things, it sought to bring into force the photo-copying system which had been introduced in some places in 1921 as an experimental measure.

The Bill encountered stout opposition from the non-official benches, principally, on the ground that it would, in the long run, throw out of employment large number of clerks. The House then adjourned.

On the 23rd JULY throwing out a motion for its postponement till the next session, after a full dress debate the Council passed the first reading of the Bill to amend the Registration Act.

The Hon. Mr. Pradhan, replying, answered the charge brought against him of inconsistency, in that, he had once voted against a similar Bill for introduction of the photo-copying system, but had since his elevation to the Ministership, become convert to it. Consistency, he said, was not always a virtue but might sometimes degenerate into persistence in error.

Eventually, the Bill was put to vote and passed by 45 against 42, the Non-Brahmins making an exception to their practice in this instance, by walking into the Opposition lobby.

The Minister-in-Charge then moved for reference of the Bill to a Select Committee. On the plea that the Government had secured an accidental victory Mr. Nariman pressed for its publication for three months to elicit public opinion.

The amendment was accepted and the House rose for the day.

#### REGULATION OF COTTON MARKETS.

On the 26th JULY the House spent the greater part of the day in discussing the Government Bill for the establishment and better regulation of cotton markets in the Bombay Presidency, a measure which embodies the results of the experiments conducted by the Indian Central Cotton Committee with a view to secure a fair deal for the grower of cotton and bring him into touch with the larger buyers of cotton and the demands of trade. The Bill is purely an enabling measure, and applies to the whole of the Presidency, excepting Bombay City and Aden. It provides for local opinion being consulted through the medium Divisional Cotton Committees and for control markets, when established,

by market committees on which will be represented cotton growers, cotton traders and the local authorities.

The Hon'ble Mr. Pradhan in introducing the Bill, tried to clear the misunderstanding that every seller of cotton would be forced to come to the open markets established under the measure. That was not the intention, he said. Though the Act had been in force in Berar for the last 30 years, the whole of the cotton trade had not yet been brought into the open market. Agriculturists, he explained, had been given 50 per cent representation on the committees, in order that their interests might be safeguarded.

Criticism was levelled against it chiefly on the score that it sought to curtail the individual liberty of buying and selling cotton.

This was answered by the assurance given on behalf of the Government that even after the Act came into force, the seller would be at perfect liberty to sell his cotton at his door, if he did not want to take advantage of the undoubted benefits offered by transaction in the open market. The first reading of the Bill was passed; and it was referred to a Select Committee.

After the Government Bill to amend the Bombay University Act, was also introduced the House rose for the day.

#### BOMBAY UNIVERSITY BILL.

On the 27th JULY a slightly communal colour was imparted to the discussion on the Bombay University Reform Bill.

The Member for the University, in support of the Bill, said that he would rather ask the Council to throw out the Bill, if the clause giving the Chancellor the power of construing the Act were not deleted.

Dr. Ambedkar, representative of the backward classes, pleaded for adequate representation for them on the Senate.

Mr. Dastur, Registrar of the University, declared that there was no class-bias in the University at all and instanced the appointment of Mr. Ambedkar himself as an examiner.

The Minister for Education assured the backward classes of fair treatment within the portals of the University. He had raised the number of representatives of the depressed classes on the Senate from 30 to 40.

The first reading of the Bill was finally passed, and it was referred to a Select Committee.

On the 28th JULY the Hon'ble Mr. Desai moved a resolution recommending the Government to incur an expenditure of Rs. 4,50,000, including the contribution of two lakhs made by Sir Dorab Tata, for building a new Pathological and Bacteriological laboratory at the Grant Medical College, Bombay.

The resolution was carried after an amendment had been accepted that the plans and estimates should be passed after consulting a committee of officials and non-officials, including two Pathologists of repute.

The Council also discussed the motion for recording the report of the Public Accounts Committee on the audit and appropriation reports for the year 1924-25.

On the 29th JULY the Council rejected an amendment disapproving of the proposal to reduce the statutory famine relief and insurance grant from Rs. 63,60,000 to Rs. 33,60,000 and further disapproving of the action of the Government in having made important alterations in the Devolution Rules without consulting or obtaining the views of the Council.

The Finance Member described it as a vote of censure on the Government; and deplored the attitude of the Members of the Council who distrusted the only Indian member of the Government.

On the 30th JULY after further discussions on the Public Accounts Committee's report, the House passed a motion for recording it.

The Revenue Member's motion for supplementary grant of about Rs. 1½ lakhs for expenditure on famine relief, was agreed to.

Four token cuts were then moved, one by one, and lost. The last two related to the grant of an extra remuneration to village officers in the Bijapur District and to the supplementary grant of Rs. 11,588, as contribution from the Bombay Presidency for expenditure in connection with the Congress of the Far Eastern Association of Tropical Medicine, to be held in India.

## CONGRESS OF TROPICAL MEDICINE.

On the 1st AUGUST after question-time, the Government suffered a defeat when the House rejected the demand for a supplementary grant of Rs. 11,588 and contribution to the expenditure in connection with the Congress of Far Eastern Association of Tropical Medicine, to be held at Calcutta in December.

Muslims and Non-Brahmins joined hands in voting against the Government.

## CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES AMENDMENT.

On the 2nd AUGUST the debate on the amendments proposed by the Government to Section 71 of the Co-operative Societies Act of 1925, was rendered lively, by a passage at arms between Mr. K. F. Nariman and the Leader of the House.

Mr. Nariman supporting the non-official amendment for the deletion of the word "political" used in the Government amendment in describing the character of the action or resolution which the Registrar might prohibit or rescind, said the Ministers in the Reformed Council were tutored by their master's voice in their decisions.

The Education Minister rose, and emphatically contradicted the statement, and asked Mr. Nariman to withdraw it.

Mr. Nariman replied that it was a legitimate criticism of the Government which was being made throughout the country.

The Leader of the House intervened, with the observation, that Mr. Nariman must accept the statement made by the Minister.

The President expressed agreement with the Leader of the House, in saying that members of the House should accept the categorical statement of the Minister; and asked Mr. Nariman to discontinue making insinuations.

Despite the assurance of the Excise Minister that Government's intention in their amendment was not to shut out all political discussion from among the members of Co-operative Societies, the House adopted the non-official amendment.

## PRESIDENT'S SALARY

On the 3rd AUGUST the Council discussed Mr. R. G. Pradhan's Bill to amend the President's Salary Act, so as to fix the salary of the elected President at Rs. 2,000 instead of at Rs. 3,000 as at present. On a point of order being raised, whether the President could occupy the chair during discussion of his salary, the President said that he was all right in his chair. (Laughter.)

The mover quoted the salaries of the Presidents of legislatures in other countries, and said the dignity of the Chair was in no way lowered by reducing the salary of the elected President. He added that the salary of the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Agent to the Governor-General in South Africa, had been fixed at Rs. 2,500; and emphasised that the President's salary was out of proportion to the average income of the people of India.

Mr. Winterbotham, opposing, said that he could understand a demand for an honorary President, but he was not prepared to agree to reduction of salary.

The Bill was eventually withdrawn.

## RE-INTRODUCTION OF BOOK-MAKERS.

On the 4th AUGUST Mr. Addyman's Bill for reintroduction of book-makers at the Bombay and Poona races, had for the first time a chance of being discussed on this day.

Moving the first reading, Mr. Addyman explained the objects of the Bill. It had been found impossible to suppress unlicensed book-makers, despite the efforts of the police. Mr. Addyman asked whether gambling through book-makers was worse than speculation through the agency of cotton brokers or share-brokers. He only wanted to tap a source of income for the Government, by introducing the Bill.

Mr. J. C. Swaminarayan opposed the Bill. He declared that book-makers would have a very bad effect on the morals of thousands of people, and would ruin them. Many public institutions, such as the Women's Indian Association and the Deccan Sabha, had expressed themselves against their reintroduction.

Mr. Nariman said from his experience as a lawyer in Criminal Courts, that the racing season was a season of tragedies in Bombay. He reminded the Government Members of the undertaking which, he said, had been given by Lord Sydenham in

1922, that no future Government would go back on his assurance against the introduction of book-makers. Mr. Nariman also referred to Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah's statement that no Government could face the effects of such backsliding.

Mr. Anderson quoted from Manu and the Mahabharata to show that gambling existed on one form or other even in Ancient India. He said that marriages, elections and budgeting of finances, amounted to gambling also.

The Home Member said that no Government could be bound down by a statement made by its predecessor, after a lapse of 15 years.

Mr. Nariman interjected: What about Queen Victoria's pledge? (Laughter).

Continuing, the Home Member said the assurance referred to by Mr. Nariman was not absolute. The Government in 1912 had only undertaken not to introduce any legislation, provided there was no change in the opinion of the Council. The Government, he said, would observe a neutral attitude towards the Bill.

Some more members spoke on the Bill, and discussion continued on the next day, the 5th AUGUST when after further discussion, the Bill was thrown out.

The House then proceeded to discuss Rao Bahadur Kale's Bill to amend the President's Salaries Act, so as to make him a whole-time man.

Sir Chunilal Mehta, Finance Member, suggested that an amendment be moved at the time of the second reading of the Bill, on the lines of the Legislative Assembly Rules, under which the President should not follow any other profession.

The Bill passed the first reading, and the Council was then adjourned.

#### DECLINE IN COTTON INDUSTRY.

The Council was prorogued on the 6th AUGUST in deference to the wishes of the members from Gujerat who were anxious to go back to the areas affected by the floods and render help.

Before the session concluded the important question of protection to the textile industry was raised by Mr. P. B. Petit. He moved a resolution recommending to the Governor in Council to take steps to bring to the notice of the Government of India the necessity of revising their decision on the Tariff Board's report, in the interest of the presidency generally and of the large classes of people in particular, whose well-being depended directly or indirectly on the industry.

The resolution was accorded whole-hearted support from all sections of the House.

Sir Chunilal Mehta, Finance Member, expressed the Government's satisfaction that they could now press for the revision of the Government of India's decision on the question, with the full backing of the House. He promised that, as recommended by the resolution, the Government of Bombay would support the demand of the mill industry. The resolution was unanimously passed.

The resolution of Mr. K. F. Nariman for the appointment of a committee to examine primary and secondary education in all aspects, was moved and partly discussed before the House rose and prorogued.

### The October Session

#### COTTON MARKETS BILL.

The attendance of members was small, when the Bombay Legislative Council commenced its sittings at Poona on the 29th SEPTEMBER.

The second reading of the Bill for the establishment and better regulation of cotton markets in the Bombay Presidency, was passed on the motion of Mr. Pradhan, Minister of Agriculture.

The report of the select committee on the Bill was presented. The town of Karachi had been excluded from the operation of the Act. Out of 15 members of the committee, 11 wrote minutes of dissent.

Several amendments were moved and rejected; but the one moved by the Minister of Agriculture, that the Local Government may, after consulting district boards and such other local authorities as they deem necessary, or upon a representation made by a district or local board, by notification in the Government Gazette, declare that any place shall be a cotton market, was carried.

An amendment that the rules for market committees be made by the Local Government with the approval of the Legislative Council, gave rise to a point of order by the Legal Remembrancer, who stated that the Legislative Council could not,

under the Government of India Act interfere with the rules made by the Executive Government. After much discussion, consideration of the point was postponed.

Another amendment to make the Government bear the expenses incidental to election was pressed to a division, and defeated by 11 to 30 votes. Discussion on other amendments was not finished, when the council rose for the day.

On the 30th SEPTEMBER the point of order raised yesterday by the Legal Remembrancer was held to be in order, and the amendment in question was with drawn in favour of a more explicit one moved by Mr. Kale, to the effect, that the rules made be placed on the Council one month previous to the next session and that they shall be liable to be rescinded or modified by a resolution of the Council.

Mr. Pradhan, Minister for Agriculture said that the amendment was *ultra vires* as the matter related to a central subject.

Mr. Cowasjee Jehangir referred to the past instances when the India Government refused to sanction Bills of the kind.

Mr. R.G. Pradhan did not think that the Central Government would be unreasonable enough to veto Bills belonging to the Transferred department.

#### UNIVERSITY ACT AMENDMENT.

A lively debate then ensued on the second reading of the Bombay University Bill. Mr. Desai, Education Minister, presented the report of the select committee who had inserted a clause in the Bill investing visitatorial powers in the Governor-General at the suggestion of the Government of India.

Mr. R. G. Pradhan's amendment to recommit the Bill to the select committee with instructions for adding a provision making it a statutory obligation on the Government to give an annual grant of not less than Rs. 3 lakhs to the University, was ruled out or order.

Mr. Swaminarayan moved an amendment to refer the Bill back to the select committee, to give time and opportunity for making a provision for regular grants from the Government. He held the Minister responsible for not insisting upon a statutory obligation for an annual grant, as the Governor acted on the advice of the Ministers in the transferred departments.

The Education Minister opposed the motion. The amendment was withdrawn, and the Bill was read a second time.

Mr. Chikodi's amendment to delete the clause investing visitatorial powers in the Governor General, was supported by the University member, who said the clause requiring the Syndicate to carry out the instruction of the Viceroy, destroyed the whole democracy of the University.

On the 1st OCTOBER the resentment of the non-official members to the clause which was inserted in the Bill at the suggestion of the Government of India, grew so acute that the consideration of the clause was held over to enable the Bombay Government to consider the view of the House.

Dr. Ambedkar's amendment that no grant-in-aid be given to any college except through the University was thrown out.

The House also rejected Mr. Ginwala's amendment that the Senate should elect the Vice-Chancellor, instead of the Chancellor appointing him.

Mr. Pradhan moved an amendment that the Vice-Chancellor be elected by the Fellows from amongst themselves by a two-thirds majority of those present at a Senate meeting convened for the purpose. His election must be subject to the approval of the Chancellor, and he should hold office for three years, and be eligible for re-election. He accepted Mr. Marzban's amendment to give up the two thirds majority provision and substitute election by ballot.

The discussion on the amendment was not concluded, when the Council adjourned.

On the 3rd OCTOBER Mr. Desai, Education Minister, opposing, said until they had seen how the Senate worked with the reduced number of nominated members (from 80 to 40), it was risky to leave it in the hands of an elected Vice-Chancellor. The amendment was pressed to a division and lost by 56 to 23 votes.

In this connection it is interesting to note that the Nationalist Party including the Swarajists, the United Nationalists and the Responsivists, walked into the Government lobby, while the Mahomedans and the Non-Brahmins, led by Mr. Jadhav, ex-Minister, voted against the Government. Thus, three popular amendments to the Bombay University Bill were thrown out.

This sudden *volte face* on the part of the Swarajists and others, is explained by the circumstance that the Non-Brahmins and the Mahomedans are understood to have approached the Education Minister, through the Mahomedan Minister for Local Self-Government, to increase the number of nominated members on the Senate from 40 to 50.

Mr. B. V. Jadhav moved an amendment to delete the clause for having a whole-timed Rector. Mr. Ambodkar said it was a superfluous burden on the limited finances of the university.

The Education Minister opposing, stated that the University would have a capital fund of Rs. 20 lakhs. The savings for the current year was about Rs. 1,50,000, and there was a strong feeling for the creation of a Rector. The Senate was evenly divided on the question. The amendment was pressed to a division, and lost by 33 to 24 votes.

Mr. Ginwalla moved an amendment for, to labour representation by the election to the Senate of one member of the Provincial Committee of the All-India Trade Union Congress.

The Education Minister, opposing, said that the Millowners' Association were given representation not as a capitalistic body but as representing Commerce and industry and as a body which might endow the university with funds.

Sir Chunilal Mehta, Leader of the House, made a statement on behalf of the Government. They might rule out the accusation of labour being kept out by capital in the university. So long as Labour was not well recognised, it was difficult to form a constituency. Mr. Ginwalla's Association would not be acceptable to all classes of labour. He did not think that Capital as such was represented on the Senate. They ought to have men who would employ graduates of the university. It was the desire of the Government and the Bill to bring in such men who would employ the products of the university. There was no organised Labour constituency. To avoid the difficulty, nominations had been provided. If any constituency could be found agreeable, there would be no objection to Labour representation.

Mr. Ginwalla's amendment was pressed to a division, and lost by 31 as against 49 votes.

An Amendment to increase the representation of the university teachers including principals from 10 to 20, was accepted and carried *nem con.*

When the discussion on Mr. Jadhav's amendment to delete the clause providing representation to the Bombay and Ahmedabad Millowner's Associations, was in progress, the Council rose for the day.

On the 4th OCTOBER the Council rejected five non-official amendments to the Bombay University Bill, by a large majority of votes, as the strength of the opposition, consisting of Mahomedans and non-Brahmins led by Mr. Jadhav, Ex-Minister, never exceeded 26, while the Swarajists and the Nationalists swelled the strength of the Education Minister in the neighbourhood of 60 in each division.

Mr. R. G. Pradhan sprung a surprise on the House, with a notice of a motion of no-confidence in Mr. Desai, Education Minister, which, was not moved, as the consent of 36 members is necessarily required.

Mr. R. G. Pradhan's motion of "no confidence" in Mr. Desai, Education Minister, stated that he failed to advance the cause of compulsory education, failed to give effect to the resolution of the House regarding the Sathe-Paranjpye scheme, gave a wrong impression to the House that His Excellency the Governor-General's sanction to the Bombay University Bill was conditional upon the Council agreeing to the provisions regarding visitatorial powers, thereby misleading the House, failed to give effect to the general demand that the Vice-Chancellor of Bombay University should be elected and failed to show Parliamentary courtesy to the House and the mover of the question by not stating his attitude with regard to the amendment for an elected Vice-Chancellor, thus depriving the Council of an opportunity to discuss the Government's position.

The resolution stated that the House felt that the transferred departments in his charge would not be administered satisfactorily in the spirit of the Government of India Act so as to ensure even such responsibility and popular progress as can be under the Act.

#### LABOUR REPRESENTATION ON THE SENATE.

Mr. Asvale moved an amendment for giving representation on the Senate to the textile labour unions of Bombay city, Ahmedabad and Sholapur. He said

there were thirty thousand labourers in the Bombay city, well organised. The member complained that since previous day, the Government was playing one party against the other, and enjoyed the fun, while the members who wore khadder, were seen going into the Government lobby.

The Education Minister opposing said that nominations had been provided for labour as it was not yet well organised and as it would be difficult for labour to get through the elections. The amendment was rejected by 53 votes against 26.

Rao Saheb D. R. Patel moved another amendment to give representation to the town municipalities.

The Education Minister opposing said the object of the Bill was to give representations as far as possible to well-organised municipalities, i. e. city municipalities.

The amendment was defeated by 58 votes against 24.

Another amendment allowing the municipalities and the local boards to elect persons other than members to represent them on the Senate, was accepted and carried.

Mr. Jadhav's amendment for forming the electorate of registered graduates into five divisional constituencies, was lost.

Mr. Noor Mahomed moved an amendment for deleting that part of the clause providing that the representative of the University on the Legislative Council, be on the Senate, if he is already not a member of the Senate.

Mr. Munshi, University Member, stated the object of the clause was to correct the anomaly of the representative of the University in the Legislative Council not representing them on the Senate, and instanced the case of Mr. Jayakar, who represented the University in the Council, but was not a member of the Senate.

The amendment was defeated and the House adjourned.

On the 5th OCTOBER when Mr. Swaminarayan's amendment to reduce the number of nominations by the Chancellor from 40 to 30 was further discussed, Sir G. H. Hidayatullah, Minister, remarked that he had received 50 applications for 5 nominated seats on the local bodies. The Honble Mr. Patel, President of the Legislative Assembly, had once been nominated to the Bandra Municipality. So also the late Mr. Gokhale and Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah had been nominated, and they had all shown sufficient independence. He was simply plagued with applications for nominations.

Replying, Mr. Swaminarayan said that Messrs. Gokhale, Patel and others rose to eminence when they sought the suffrages of the people, and not at the time when they got nominated.

The Education Minister, Mr. Desai, opposing said that nominations were provided for good men who might not like the troubles of elections, and he was unwilling to reduce the number. The amendment was lost.

#### COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION QUESTION

A heated debate then ensued on Mr. Noor Mahomed's amendment to increase the number of nominated seats from 40 to 50.

In connection with this amendment, it is interesting to note that it had been suggested, that the refusal on the part of Education Minister to increase the nominations from 40 to 50, was responsible for the compact between the Mahomedan and Non-Brahmin members against the Minister.

Mr. Noor Mahomed said he wanted to remove the misapprehension that the Mahomedans and Non-Brahmins had made a common cause to drive away Mr. Desai, the Education Minister. They were only giving a straight fight.

The Education Minister, opposing assured the Muslims and Non-Brahmins, as Minister, that he would protect their interests as far as it lay in his power and as he had protected hitherto.

Replying to the charge of Mr. Rafiuddin, that the Moslems were not represented on the Senate, the Minister said that out of 3 nominations during his regime of 9 months, two Mahomedans, Syed Nawab Ali and Sir Fazalbhoy, and one Non-Brahmin, namely Principal Rawlinson (laughter) were nominated to the Senate. He then replied to the charge of killing Islamic culture, and informed the House that a college for Mahomedans would be shortly started at Andheri. He said that local boards were adequately represented, and Muslims and Non-Brahmins who lived largely in the rural areas, could come through those bodies.

Referring to another charge made that Mirza Ali Mahomed Khan was defeated in the Senate elections because he was a Mahomedan, the Minister pointed out that

the person was defeated by Mr. Rafiuddin, who was his rival, and not because he was a Mahomedan. If the communities quarrelled amongst themselves, they had no right to accuse the Education Minister. The amendment was passed to a division and defeated by 49 votes against 26. After another amendment was ruled out of order the Council adjourned.

On the 7th OCTOBER the Council disposed of about 50 amendments to the University Bill, some of them being either withdrawn or not moved at all.

In moving the amendment, that the recommendation of the Senate to the Local Government for the cancellation of the appointment of Fellows be supported by 3/4ths instead of 2/3rds of the whole number of Fellows, Mr. Swaminarayan said that the clause was likely to be used against political workers. The amendment was defeated by 45 votes against 11.

Mr. Jadhav's amendment that a Fellow shall not be eligible for reappointment or re-election until the disqualification against him was removed by the Local Government, was accepted and carried.

Another amendment moved by Mr. Jadhav that three persons be nominated by the Chancellor from among the Fellows to the Syndicate, was opposed by the Education Minister.

On the 8th OCTOBER debate was resumed on Mr. Swaminarayan's amendment to the University Bill giving power of disaffiliating colleges to the Senate instead of to the Government. Mr. Swaminarayan made a strong attack against the Swarajists and Responsivists who, he said, had made a one-sided compromise with the result that the Government got what they wanted, i.e., a nominated Vice-Chancellor.

On the motion of the Education Minister, consideration of the clause relating to visitatorial powers of the Viceroy was held over till the next session as the Local Government was in communication with the Government of India.

#### THE SMALL HOLDINGS BILL.

One of the important measures of the session was introduced on this day when Sir Chunilal Mehta moved the first reading of the Small Holdings Bill. The Bill which deals only with agricultural land consists of two parts—the first containing proposals to prevent further sub-division and fragmentation, while the second intends to consolidate the scattered and fragmented holdings in certain selected and specified villages. The object of the Bill is to remedy the evils due to excessive sub-division and fragmentation of agricultural holdings as far as possible. Sir Chunilal made a lengthy speech on the necessity and importance of legislation in the matter which was well appreciated by all sections in the Council who cheered him on his concluding his speech. Drafting had been most difficult because they wanted a solution which would not contravene the accepted law of inheritance both because a revolutionary change in the law of inheritance would scarcely be acceptable to the people and also as it was difficult to see the result in the distant future of the grave social changes to be effected. Though he was a believer in the ryotwari system, it suffered from lack of initiative and capacity to take risks in cultivation and launch out into new methods involving capital and use of machinery—qualities associated with the big landholder. How much more acute was the problem in the ryotwari tracts where the cultivator became a broken man greatly indebted to the exacting Sowcar, wasting his time between small scattered fragments and unable to maintain himself and family? In such a state, the advantages of peasant proprietorship were lost and it became difficult to realise the well-known saying of Arthur Young that the magic of property turned the sand into gold. In addition to giving security of tenure, a specific guarantee was given under the Act against any increase of assessment due to improvements by the cultivator. The speaker implored that it should be clearly understood that there was no attempt to create holdings of enormous size or a class of powerful zamindars; nor was there an insidious design to provide cheap labour to factories.

In all the divisions of presidency holdings upto and under five acres had gone up in the five years, 1916-21. There was an increase of 30,000 in the Northern division or 10 per cent. under 8 per cent in Central and 5 per cent in Southern Division. Holdings from 5 to 25 acres were on the decrease in Gujarat, while both the other divisions showed an increase.

Continuing Sir Chunilal Mehta referred to the disadvantages of allowing the present practice to continue, and showed how it militated against profitable



cultivation. He then detailed how attempts were made to introduce legislation in the matter in the Presidency. In the first part of the Bill which, if passed, would come automatically into operation, attempts were made to prevent further growth of the evil without making revolutionary changes in the laws and customs of the people : while the second relating to consolidation was a permissive one in so far as the requirement of a specified majority was concerned. Continuing, Sir Chunilal dealt with the objection to the Bill, namely, interference with the laws of inheritance and succession, and said that the law of inheritance gave each heir a share but it was not essential that each and every kind of property should be actually divided by metes and bounds. In the case of landed property, the promotion of the good of the State should be the guiding principle and should take precedence over private interests. There was no prohibition against ownership in common or against joint enjoyment of the proceeds. What was prohibited was actual division by metes and bounds. Regarding the policy of voluntary consolidation, he referred to attempts made in the Punjab, the Central Provinces, Bombay and Madras and instanced the late Sir Ganga Ram and others who felt the necessity of legislation.

Concluding he replied to other objection of apprehension of expropriation of landed proprietors. He said the unit had been defined as the minimum necessary for profitable cultivation, there was a suspicion that many would be deprived of land and remain unemployed. That need not be the case. In most cases the owner would get land approximately equal to what he owned, but only in a compact block or blocks.

Most of the members gave general consent to the principle of the Bill and the Council adjourned. The Bill was read for the first time and referred to select committee.

#### FLOOD RELIEF MEASURES.

On the 11th OCTOBER flood relief in Gujarat and Sindh loomed largely in the minds of the members of the Council, when supplementary grants were demanded.

Sir M. Hidayatullah's demand for Rs. 4,000 for the purchase of anti-rinderpest serum, for the Sind Veterinary Department, was granted.

The Revenue Member's demand for Rs. 1,15,000. for refund of the value of the stamps embossed on cheques and drafts owing to the stamp duty on cheques being abolished, was granted.

A grant of Rs. 1,80,507 for expenditure on famine relief was made.

The Council also granted Sir M. Hidayatullah's demand for Rs. 115,000 for emergent works and repairs to buildings and roads damaged in the flood-affected parts.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir's demand for Rs. 645,000, for additional funds for the Back Bay Scheme, raised a protest from the Bombay members. The expenditure during the year on the Back Bay Scheme, was in excess of the Budget provision by Rs. 9,21,000 and Mr. Swaminarayan's amendment for a cut of Re. 1 was disallowed as not being in time and as it was considered to be a vote of censure.

Mr. Husseinbhoy Lalji and Mr. Lalji Narainji criticised Government policy. The latter asked Government to scrap the dredgers "Zinga", "Kalu" and "Sir George Lloyd", and appealed to the Government to resort to dry-filling which was a cheaper method than wetfilling.

Mr. Rieu, Revenue Member, made a demand of Rs. 1,54,08,476 for expenditure on flood relief. Expenditure already incurred included Rs. 75,000 for general relief in Broach and Ahmedabad, Rs. 2 lakhs for corrugated iron sheets, and Rs. 10,000 for the supply of seeds. Takkavi advances to the extent of Rs. 6 lakhs for Thar Parkar and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs for Hyderabad and about 11 lakhs for Gujarat had been made. The Government were considering the scheme for co-operative construction societies, the cost of which would be about Rs. 6 lakhs. An additional 1 crore and fifteen lakhs were earmarked for loans for reconstructing houses. Ten lakhs were required for free grants of building materials to the lower classes in Sind and Gujarat. It was proposed to meet the direct expenditure of about 11 lakhs from the Famine Fund.

Rao Saheb Desai and Mr. G. I. Patel expressed dissatisfaction with the paltry demand, while the loss was colossal. The former challenged the Government's figures regarding damage to crops by the floods. The House then adjourned.

Further discussion was continued on the next day, the 12th OCTOBER when Mr. Rieu, Revenue Member, replying, said his information was that the people

expected loans without interest, for which there was no ground. In any case, it was not a fact that the Government were going to charge 8 per cent on the loans. He informed the House that it was only after considerable misgivings that the Government had decided to debit loans for reconstruction against the Famine Insurance Fund, as it was not intended for affording means of replacing houses on a very big scale. The question of remitting interest wholesale on these loans, could not possibly arise and it was quite impossible to make any such concession. Regarding the general remission of revenue he said there was no justification for any such remission. But special cases would be considered. The Flood Relief Officer had authority to deal with special cases for remission of interest on loans. The grant for takkavi loans in Sind was not necessarily the final allotment. But if the Collector asked for more, the Government would meet the demands.

#### HINDU MEMBERS' WALK-OUT

Mr. Pahaljani sprang a surprise on the House. He rose to make a statement on behalf of the Hindu members. He said that they had learnt the decision in the Talegaon procession case in which 45 Hindus were convicted. They wanted to move an adjournment motion. But, before doing so, they wanted to place before the House their strong protest against the treatment given to the members by the Government. When the case was being tried, many members of the Council tried to approach the Governor.

The Home Member: Is this in order?

The speaker continuing said that the Hindu members of the Council were considerably aggrieved at their not being given an opportunity of seeing the Governor and therefore they thought it necessary to leave the Council.

Mr. Pahaljani along with the other Hindu members walked out, leaving the officials and the nominated and Mahomedan members to deal with the remaining two official bills.

The Bombay District Police Bill which enables the agents of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to be vested with powers of police officers, and the Bombay Port Trust Bill to create special funds, including an employees' welfare fund were passed.

On the 13th OCTOBER the Government business concluded with the disposal of five official Bills. The Port Trust Bill was postponed till the next session.

The Bombay Children's Bill, giving power, to the Chief Presidency Magistrate to hear appeals against the orders of the Juvenile Courts, was passed into law after three readings.

On the 14th OCTOBER Mr. Swaminarayan moved the Gujarat Talukdari Amending Bill which seeks to compel Talukdars to keep their expenditure below their incomes.

The Bill intended to remove the exemption from Sections 127 to 136 both inclusive, of the land revenue code granted to the Talukdars, in order to determine the representative rights of the talukdars and their tenants by a regular survey of the village sites.

It was opposed by the Education and Local Board Ministers.

The Takore of Karwada opposing said that the Talukdars did take as much interest as anybody else; while Mr. Jairamdas Desai stated that the object of the Bill evidently was to hand over the talukdars to the mercy of the Marwaris.

The Revenue Member, opposing, said that the Government was as solicitous as the members of the Council. The Bill was thrown out without a division.

The Local Boards Bill was not moved.

Mr. Asvale moved a Bill to amend the City of Bombay Municipal Act. with the object of lowering the franchise to Rs. 5.

Mr. Lalji Narainji, Sir Vasant Rao, and Sir. M. Hidayatulla opposed; while Mr. Jadhav and Mr. Ligade strongly supported. The Council was then adjourned.

On the 15th OCTOBER a protracted debate ensued on Mr. Bole's Bill for reservation of 18 seats for the Backward and depressed Classes in the Bombay Corporation.

The Bill was pressed to a division and defeated by 50 votes against 17.

On the 17th OCTOBER Mr. Syed Munawar's Bill for having four nominated members to present Labour in the Bombay Corporation, was postponed till the next session.

Sir Vasantrao Dabalker and Mr. Marzaban supported the Bill while Sir M. Hidayatullah, Minister, said that he should first consult the Corporation.

Mr. Pahaljani's Bill to prevent deadlocks in Municipalities was accepted by the Minister for local Self-Government, and was passed.

Three more private Bills were introduced.

Mr. R. G. Pradhan's motion for the appointment of standing committees of the Legislative Council, as recommended by the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Government of India Bill of 1919, was under consideration when the Council adjourned.

On the 18th OCTOBER the Council discussed two important motions of Mr. R. G. Pradhan, one for presenting a petition to H. E. the Governor for appointing a Standing Committee of the Legislative Council as recommended by the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Government of India Bill 1919, and the other for the appointment of Council Secretaries as provided under S. 62 (4) of the Government of India Act.

Sir Chunilal Mehta opposing the first motion said no member had thought it fit to say a single word about the resolution, which Mr. Pradhan had taken half an hour to move. Regarding the Finance Committee of the Bombay Council, he said that the members of the Council were not desirous of expressing their views though the Committee was meant for the purpose of having informal discussions across the table and enable the Government to lay before the chosen members of the House, in an informal manner, all the information they had with regard to the financial condition of the Presidency. Personally he thought the question had come rather late in view of the forthcoming appointment of the Royal Commission. The Government were not prepared to accept it.

The motion was negatived.

The second motion for the appointment of Council Secretaries was opposed by Sir M. Hidayatullah who said that the Government would appoint Secretaries if the Council wanted them.

Sir Chunilal Mehta referred to the history of what had been done in other provinces since the Act came into force. Four provinces, namely, Madras, the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and Burma, had tried the experiment and abandoned it. Would it surprise the mover, if the speaker were to tell him that within the first four or six months of the introduction of the Reforms the Ministers received several suggestions for taking up members as Council Secretaries? They decided, after consideration, to wait for a little time to see the working of the Council and also to see what the other councils was doing. After six months, not a single member of the House was anxious to be a Council Secretary; and there was not a single suggestion that Secretaries should be appointed to act with either the Ministers or members of the Government. Since June 1921, there had been no suggestion in that respect.

The motion was thrown out.

Mr. Nariman's resolution for the appointment of a committee to co-ordinate and reorganise primary and secondary education and to consider the introduction of physical training in schools, was rejected as a committee had already been appointed by the Education Minister.

Consideration of two other resolutions was postponed till the next session. The Council was then prorogued.

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# Madras Legislative Council.

## The No-Confidence resolution

The monsoon session of the Madras Legislative Council commenced at Madras on the 23rd AUGUST. His Excellency the Governor was watching the proceedings from his box and the House and the public galleries were crowded to its utmost. The news that the "no-confidence" motion was likely to be taken up on this day had attracted hundreds of students to the galleries.

"The Ministers do not possess the confidence of the House"—this was the simple resolution moved by Mr. Venkatachallam CHETTI, leader of the Opposition in the Council, in moving the "no-confidence" resolution.

Explaining his party attitude during the last budget debate, Mr. Chetty said that his party was always ready to use its vote against the Ministry when the Party was satisfied that such a course would achieve the objective of the Congress, namely the wrecking of Diarchy. Since then the memorable Coimbatore decisions, he proceeded, have brought about the situation in which the formation of any ministry in place of the present one is impossible either now or after the dissolution. Diarchy, he continued, is an unworkable machine and an unmanageable monster. It has given rise to very many anomalous positions besides saddling the country with a very heavy expenditure. The rights prescribed under the section are circumscribed by conditions reducing those rights to disabilities.

"Diarchy is a dead horse. It may be buried unwept, unhonoured and unsung. The last general elections wrote the death warrant of the system"—said Swami Venkatachalam. After reviewing the results of the last elections the speaker said the Government set out to find three gentlemen to form the ministry. The quest was successful. But such situation cannot last long. It is straining the constitution to its breaking point. He declared that a party with only a dozen elected men behind it should run the administration of the Transferred Department. That it should be run by the aid of votes dependent on the will of the executive is an outrageous negation of all fundamental ideas of popular government.

Mr. B. Ramachandra Reddi, Independent Justice, who had originally tabled a motion of his own supported the motion. He characterised the Ministry's doings in local self-Government Department as intolerable. 'We are not obstructionists' declared Mr. Reddi. "We are supporting the present motion only to scrap dyarchy". He had no objection to leave the administration to the reserved half of the bureaucracy. Thereby administration could not be stopped for it was bound to continue irrespective of the Ministry which was now patting on the back of unwary people and getting their support. The speaker accused the Excise Minister of seeking to go behind his promise of making Nellore dry immediately for he was already auctioning contracts for arrack licenses for next year in the district.

Dewan Bahadur Krishna NAIR, ex-Dewan of Travancore, associated himself with the remarks of the previous speakers and agreed that dyarchy was unworkable but he would add that during the Justice Ministry's power Lord Willington had practically suspended dyarchy. (Hear, hear). He had nothing to say against the Ministers personally for they were all honourable men. (Hear, Hear and laughter). The Present Ministers ought not to have been appointed belonging as they did to the smallest elected group in the Council. During seventeen days of the last budget session the Ministers faced no less than three defeats. The Dewan Bahadur reminded the Ministers that not long ago in a division they had the support of only twenty one elected members including themselves as against fifty-eight elected members which fact with the others which the speaker cited showed that the Ministry never commanded the confidence of the house. Lord Lytton had inuniciated the principle that if the Ministers should be defeated even by one rupee in their first demand it meant the no-confidence of the House. Strangely enough Madras Ministers now in spite of three successive and clear defeats had not resigned. Mr. Krishnan Nair continuing accused the Ministers of having nominated sixteen or seventeen members of the Legislative Council to membership of local boards and

other committees controlled by Ministers constitutionally. The Ministry had committed great blunders and the speaker hoped that before being compelled to resign they would voluntarily do so.

Mr. T. C. Srinivasa IYENGAR (Ministerialist) opposing the motion accused the last speaker of wandering from China to Peru and of taking advantage of a plain motion. Replying to Mr. Reddy's charges regarding prohibition Mr. Iyengar said that when a new Government succeeded an old one it was not easy to change the lines laid down by the retiring one. He congratulated the Congress party on joining hands with the Justices who after disappointment at not being called to office discovered the unworkability of dyarchy. The speaker thought if dyarchy should be scrapped it should be by getting the Act amended and not by turning out the Ministry in any case, let it not be forgotten that the portion was an attack on dyarchy and the system of administration and should not reflect on the Ministry.

Mr. R. Srinivasa Iyengar (Swarajist) while supporting the motion of censure defended the Ministry's nominations which after all were better than those of the Justice Ministry which had perpetuated communalism and favouritism. (Some members :—Are you defending the Ministry ?

Mr. Iyengar :—No, I am only exposing the misrule of the justice Ministry. Continuing the speaker said he recognised the high patriotism of the present Ministers when he would however condemn them for belonging to a vicious system.

Mr. Arpudesswami Udayar (Justice) notwithstanding his party nomenclature opposed the motion for he was a believer in evolution and not revolution.

[ Owing to huge crowds waiting outside the President threw open the doors of the House and admitted a large number of visitors to the floor of the House where they were permitted to squat down. ]

Mr. Saladhana (Swarajist) supporting the motion asked if the Madras Ministers possessed even half as much power as British Ministers of even fourteenth century. Where then was the use of Ministers and Councils. He was willing, however, to recognise that Ministers were Congress members and proud of being so. He in his turn would have felt proud to cross floor had Ministers had courage to threaten resignation. After further speeches the House adjourned.

Nextday, the 24th AUGUST Mr. Chettiar, resuming discussion on the "no confidence" motion, asked if the present Ministers who had voted with the opposition during the last "no confidence" motion against the "Justice" Ministers were themselves free from communalism which formed the subject of the charge against the last Ministers. Mr. Chettiar added that the G. O. S. before they were signed leaked out of the Secretariat.

The Swarajist Chief Whip attacked the Chief Minister for his remark that non-co-operation was a failure. He asked if the last election result did not prove its abundant success. The Ministers had not ever fought with the reserved half. On the other hand they had allowed Mr. Moir, the Finance Member, to act the dominating mother-in-law over them. (Loud laughter). If his Excellency resumed the administration the country would be no worse, nor was he enamoured of the Royal Commission which could only take away dyarchy, but then non-co-operation would come back to stay.

Mr. N. Shivaraj (Nominated Depressed Classes representative) opposed the motion and defended dyarchy.

Mr. Shivaraj quoted Dr. Ansari pleading for responsive co-operation and averred that in view of the large funds now available dyarchy should be given a fair chance.

The Raja of Panagal supporting the motion defended his party against the attacks made on them. His party had felt that the reforms should not be condemned without giving it a fair trial. Now, a fair trial had been given and they were now condemning the system of dyarchy. The Raja also referred to his evidence before the Muddiman Committee that reiterated that dyarchy was unworkable under the present circumstances.

#### CHIEF MINISTER'S DEFENCE

The Chief Minister, Dr. Subbarayan, who followed analysed the charges against himself and his colleague and defended the nominations objected to by Dewan Bahadur Krishnan Nair.

Dr. Subbarayan, continuing said that Madras had always prided itself on having worked the reforms successfully for seven long years and it would be disastrous

now to do away with dyarchy on the eve of the Royal Commission and when huge funds were available for the schemes of the transferred departments. The Chief Minister then referred to Dr. Ansari's statement and said that when a gentleman who, he believed, was going to be elected Congress president had given a clear and right lead, the Madras Swarajists who, the speaker had believed were tending towards responsive co-operation, should not be parties to the "no-confidence" motion. The Chief Minister also refuted the charges of communalism and said that he had only been guided by principles enunciated by the United Nationalists.

#### ANALYSIS OF VOTING

The no-confidence motion was defeated by 56 votes to 67. (All the fifty-six who voted for the motion were elected members. Of the sixty-seven who voted against the motion fourteen were officials, twenty-three nominated and only thirty elected members. Of the thirty elected members who voted for the Ministers six were Europeans. The House then adjourned.

#### OFFICIAL BUSSINESS

On the 26th AUGUST the Council met to transact official business. Immediately after question time Dr. Mallya, Swarajist moved an adjournment of the house to consider the question of scarcity of water in the city and consequent outbreak of cholera. It was suggested that the motion was not in order. It was not primarily a matter under the concern of the local Government. The leader of the opposition and Dr. Mallya contending the motion was in order pointed out that the Red Hills Lake was under diarchicai govt. as both the corporation and Govt. had control over it. Government contended that the motion did not relate to any recent occurrence but the opposition was able to quote the Government order passed recently affecting water supply to the Corporation.

The motion was admitted and the president fixed the afternoon for discussion.

Supplementary grants were then taken up. The leader of the Opposition moved that consideration be postponed till the next day. Government did not oppose the motion and it was carried. The house next proceeded to discuss new draft rules the Govt. proposed to make under the local Boards Act.

The House then adopted the Finance Member's motion regarding the Public Accounts Committee report. On the motion of Mr. Gosman, Home Member, the Council passed a bill repealing the Planters' Labour Act.

Speaking on the adjournment motion the Minister of Public Health stated that the question of improving water supply was under consideration. He emphasised the urgent need for Government support to corporation by way of grants to meet the situation. Hon'ble Dr. P. Subbarayan, Chief Minister, recognised the urgency of the question and need for ensuring adequate supply for domestic as well as industrial purposes. The only thing which could improve the position now was rain which he added, amidst laughter, was not under the control of Government. Mr. C. W. Chambers, European representative, suggested the appointment of an expert committee to consider the Government scheme for improvement of water supply.

The Hon. Mr. T. E. Moir, Finance Member, was heard to say that Government favoured the suggestion and were alive to their share of responsibility in the complicated question.

Before the adjournment motion was voted upon the Chief Minister promised to lend the required amount to the corporation relying on which the Opposition agreed to withdraw the motion. The Ministers concerned were absent from the House when the leave was asked for to withdraw it, but on the challenge of the "Justice" party block the original motion was put and carried without a division.

The Council also passed into law the Madras Planters' Labour Act Repealing Bill as amended by the Select Committee.

The Council then considered certain amendments to the Madras Prevention of Adulteration Act Amending Bill, particularly regarding the definition of milk, and the consideration had not finished when the Council rose for the day.

On the 27th AUGUST the Minister for Public Health stated that the estimated loss on account of recent fire in Madras Medical College, so far as damage to chemicals and apparatus was concerned, was about four to five thousand pounds sterling. In reply to interpellation, the Hon'ble Ranganath Mudaliar, Minister for Development, stated that the Hindu Religious Endowments and Amending Bill was

likely to be ready for introduction in October. Replying to a question by Mr. C. V. Venkatramaniyengar, Deputy Leader of Congress party, on strike situation at Coimbatore the Law Member stated that no case of injury to strikers had been reported. He had no intention of going to Coimbatore or of sending the Labour Commissioner there. It was also elicited that proceedings against Mr. N. S. Ramaswami Iyengar, Labour Union President, were not launched after consultation with the Labour Commissioner of Government but were taken by local authorities. Replying to questions on protection of Neil statue the Law Member stated that police had been watching the statue to prevent any overt act being done and that on the last occasion some young men concealed their weapons which were under their clothes and sprang into the railings suddenly. He said the Government did not propose to ask the Crown Prosecutor to move the High Court to revise the sentences passed on the young men. Mr. Satyamurti suggested that Government should see less severe section was used but the Law member said that Government would not interfere.

#### MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT OF HOUSE.

Dewan Bahadur M. Krishnan Nair asked for leave to move for adjournment of the House to discuss Malabar tenancy question and the House having granted leave the President fixed the afternoon for discussion.

By 42 against 40 votes the Madras Legislative Council carried Dewan Bahadur Krishna Nair's adjournment motion on the issue of Malabar tenancy committee. The supporters included Mr. Madhawan Nair and Mr. Satyamurti condemned the constitution of the Committee with the Law member and expressed willingness to consider the reconstitution. Contrary to expectations the Council proceeded after the adjournment motion to discuss supplementary grants a few of which were carried the rest having to be held over for want of time.

The Council then adjourned *sine die*.

# The U. P. Legislative Council.

The monsoon session of the U. P. Legislative Council met at Naini Tal on the 21ST JUNE and devoted the day to a discussion of supplementary grants on demand under the Board of Revenue. The constitutional issue relating to the restoration of grants by H. E. the Governor was raised but the grant was carried by the casting vote of the President.

## The Police Demand.

On the 22ND JUNE in moving for the omission of Rs. 1,06,626 concerning the constabulary in the U. P. Council, Rai Bahadur Lala Mathura Prasad Mehrotra criticised the reasons advanced by the Government for the increase in the armed police force. He pointed out that in emergencies Government could always requisition the aid of the military.

Khan Bahadur Hafiz Hidayar Hussain did not favour the omission of the demand but pressed for a reduction by Rs. 27,000. He referred to the tension of the feelings between the communities and said that riots were likely to break out at any place at any hour. During such emergencies the police force had to be drafted from one place to another and it was a fact that on occasions policemen were kept on duty for 18 hours in a day. He, therefore, favoured the grant of a substantial portion of the demand. The blame for this unhappy communal situation however rested both with the Government and with the educated men in either community. The latter showed supine indifference to the need of the country and failed to inculcate among the masses the principles of toleration and broad outlook. A little consideration for the other on the part of either community would have stopped the communal riots and in his opinion Government was not altogether above all blame. Government only concerned itself with the preservation of law and order and came to the scene only when riots had actually broken out. Government had a different policy when Non-co-operation was in full swing. At that time Government spared neither money nor men for propaganda purposes. He wanted to know why Government did not adopt a similar policy now.

Pandit Gurtu moved for the total omission of the demand of Rs. 17,323 for the armed police force and doubted if the difficulties that Government experienced were not due to the bad organisation of the existing armed police force. He believed it was quite possible to make the existing force much more effective even at its present strength. He assured the House that it was even possible to reduce the strength of the present armed force. He based his opinion on the recommendation of the Armed Police Committee of which the present Inspector-General of Police was a member.

Nawab of Chhattari, Home Member, said that he was surprised at the attitude the Council had taken towards this demand. The police was seldom favoured by the Legislature. Most of the duties performed were of a representative nature and were not adequately appreciated by the public. He would ask the House to consider what would be the position if the police force was inefficient. For some time past the service in the armed police force was getting more and more unpopular. Sickness had increased immensely and for the last two years there were nearly 226 resignations annually from this force because leave could seldom be granted to these men. During the recent Aligarh riots, when he enquired of the Superintendent of Police why there was a fresh outbreak on the second day the reply was that the police force was utterly inadequate. Requisitioning of the military was an expensive affair and Government did not favour it on that account. One lakh out of half a crore could not be deemed a lion's share. It was too much to believe that the Government favoured or fomented communal troubles. It was anything but pleasing to him, the Home Member of the Government, to see his own brethren breaking one another's heads. His appeal to his countrymen was "my brothers, pause and think and look ahead. Hands were given us to clasp and not to break heads."

Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, Swarajist leader, opposed the demand and said that the money available could be better utilised than that of strengthening the police force. To their shame Indians had to admit that on occasions they had worked themselves into activities of a suicidal character and had thereby given a handle to the enemies of Indian Swaraj. Admitting that Government had been provoking these disturbances, it was the Indians who were responsible for having yielded to those mischievous influences. He for



one did not in any way disown responsibility for the unhappy communal situation. But what was its remedy? To what extent could the police force be enlarged to keep peace between 33 crores of Hindus and Mussalmans? If Hindus preponderated in the police force the Muslims would have no confidence in it and "vice versa." That was an unfortunate lesson from the Calcutta riots. Communal suspicion was a disease of the mind and the cure lay there and not in external remedies. The remedy was in propaganda and in expenditure in bringing about better understanding between the two communities.

Mr. C. Y. Chintamani referred to the recommendation of the Armed Police Force Committee which consisted of three senior members of the Civil Service and three senior police officers, including the present Inspector-General. The speaker failed to understand why the Government should treat lightly the recommendations of such a committee. Proceeding, Mr. Chintamani quoted figures to show that the total number of fire arms with which the police were armed was the largest in the United Provinces compared to Bombay Madras, Bengal and the Punjab. He also pointed out that the reported offences against public tranquillity were less in the United Provinces than in any other major Province in India. The speaker further pointed out that the expenditure on the police in the United Provinces had, since 1920-21 till the current year, increased by over 50 per cent. During the same period the increase in Madras was by 4 and half per cent, in Bombay by 11, Bengal by 13 and half, Punjab by 9 and half, Burma by 6, Behar by 13 and Assam by 24 per cent. Proceeding, he said that the remedy for communal tension is not increased armed police but an impartial policy and firm administration. If the Government made up their minds to promulgate and actually to adopt and to pursue a policy of strict equity and impartiality and if they made it clear to their District Magistrates that the occurrence of a riot in the district would be regarded as a certain sign of the failure of that Magistrate in the performance of his duty. I do not say that the riots would absolutely stop but I do affirm that there would be far fewer occurrences than have disfigured the history of this Province during the last few years.

Raja Kulsalpal Singh, opposing the motion for reduction, said that a strong police force was an insurance against crime. Wherever there were riots the armed police was much in demand and that proved that the armed police was the most suited to deal with communal disturbances.

After some further speeches closure was applied and the Nawab of Chattari, Home Member, in winding up the debate, assured the House that the Armed Police Committee's report would shortly be published.

The motion for omission of the total demand on account of the increased armed police was put before the House and rejected by 47 votes to 42, but the amendment reducing the demand by Rs. 27,000 was adopted without division. The Government also accepted two motions for reductions aggregating to Rs. 18,000 and the entire police demand less Rs. 40,000 was next put. Swarajists and Nationalists wanted to reject the entire demand but it was voted by 43 votes to 33.

#### Other Demands.

Supplementary estimates under forest (Rs. 2,244), irrigation works (Rs. 19,935) and stationery and printing (Rs. 580) were next voted without much discussion.

The jail demand of Rs. 2,229 next came up for discussion and there were several lively debates in regard to the treatment of prisoners and electric installations in Agra and Naini Jails in order to provide punkhas to Europeans and select Indian prisoners. The House voted down the amount of Rs. 1,000 required for electrification. Another item of Rs. 12,500 required for the construction of a quarter for the special medical officer at Sultanpur jail where short-term tubercular prisoners are segregated was also voted out and the rest of the demand granted. The Council then adjourned.

#### Pay of Clerks and Peons.

On the 23RD JUNE the Council reassembled to consider supplementary estimates. Three heavy defeats during the day somewhat counter-balanced a series of victories that the Government had during the last two days. The first of these defeats related to a token cut moved by Mr. C. Y. Chintamani who urged that the pay of the clerks in the Allahabad High Court should be revised in a manner better than what the Government intended to do by means of to-day's supplementary estimates.

The Nawab of Chattari, Home Member, opposing the motion said that the Government has gone as far as they deemed fit.

Mr. Chintamani claimed a division and the token cut was adopted by 49 votes to 25.

#### Another Token Cut.

The second defeat of the Government to-day was also over a token cut moved by

Pandit G. B. Pant as a protest against placing certain medical officers in Tari Bahadur Government estates under the control of the Executive Officers.

Sir Sam O'Donnell Finance Member, said that the Government did so in their capacity as landholders over that area.

Mr. Pant's motion after a short debate was adopted by 41 votes against 33.

#### Re-Survey of Districts.

There was a prolonged debate over the motion for omission of the supplementary provision of Rs. 13,000 for re-survey work in the three districts of Fyzabad, Bahraich and Sultanpur. Mr. Hafiz Hidayat Hussain set the ball rolling and one after another non-official members condemned the settlement policy of the Government. The refusal of the Government to reintroduce the Land Revenue Bill which was withdrawn last year, because of certain amendments adopted by the Council was severely criticised from all corners of the House. It may be recalled that the Budget demand of over eight lakhs for survey and settlement was refused by the Council in March last and had recently been certified by H. E. the Governor. Members opposing the supplementary demand to-day advanced arguments similar to those they had put forward in March last and Sir Sam O'Donnell, in opposing to-day's motion, said that he had little to add to what he had already stated in the course of the full dress debate on this question during the Budget session. The motion for the omission of the demand was adopted by 56 votes against 22.

#### American Road-making Demonstration.

An interesting debate relating to the item concerning demonstration of certain American road-making machines was in progress when the Council adjourned for the day. The scope of this experimental work is explained in a printed note. Negotiations had been in progress with the Russell Grader Company of Minneapolis U. S., who have made an offer which the Government propose to accept with some modifications. The terms of the agreement are that the Company will send one large and one small road-making machine and deliver these at Cawnpore free of cost. The Company will send a capable demonstrator who will operate machines and will be capable of actually building roads and of training Indian operators to handle the machines. The period of demonstration will be three months. The Government will pay the demonstrator first class passage from Minneapolis to Cawnpore and back, his hotel bills during the journey and the daily allowances. The estimated cost to the Government will be Rs. 7,000. Swarajist and Nationalist members headed by Mr. C. Y. Chintamani were opposed to this demonstration whereas the Zamindar members and the businessmen in the Council favoured it.

#### Mr. Chintamani's Motion Withdrawn.

On the 24TH JUNE the debate on Mr. Chintamani's motion for omission of Rs. 20,000 in the supplementary estimates concerning the demonstration of American road making machines was resumed. After five hours' heated discussion the motion was withdrawn.

The debate was full of interest and excitement, more particularly because of the exchange of personal attacks between supporters and opposers of the motion.

The amount required for experimental machines was voted in its entirety.

The education demand was under discussion when the Council adjourned for the day.

#### The "Pratap" Case Echo.

On the 25TH JUNE Babu Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, who had nearly fifty questions standing against his name, wanted to know what action Government had taken against the Sub-Inspector of Shikohabad Police Station who had sued him (the questioner) for defamation. It may be mentioned here that this question and several others following it have reference to what is known as the Pratap defamation case. Mr. Vidyarthi, who is the Editor of "Pratap," was sued for defamation by the Sub-Inspector of Police. Mr. Vidyarthi was found guilty by the lower court but was acquitted by the High Court who held that the allegations against the Sub-Inspector were "prima facie" true. The High Court at first directed that judicial proceedings should be instituted against the Sub-Inspector but subsequently they withdrew the direction and merely brought to the notice of the District Magistrate the observation of the Hon'ble Judges in their judgment concerning the Sub-Inspector for such enquiry and action as he might consider expedient.

Replying to the original question to-day, the Nawab of Chhattari, Home Member, said that in accordance with the High Court's directions the Superintendent of Police was making enquiries which are expected to be completed shortly. On receipt of his report the District Magistrate would decide what further action, if any, should be taken in the matter.

## Adjournment Motion.

This answer gave rise to a policy of supplementary questions, the replies to which did not prove satisfactory to the Swarajist group of members and eventually Mr. G. H. Pant handed over notice of a motion on an adjournment of the House.

Before admitting this notice to be in order Rai Bahadur Lala Sitaram, President, remarked : "The House will concede to me the difficulty of deciding the matter off hand. On the one hand the Hon'ble Members who put supplementary questions contend that the High Court gave definite directions to the Executive to proceed with the case and they found the charges against the Police substantiated. On the other hand, Government says definitely that all that the High Court did was to direct the attention of the Executive to these and it is for their action and enquiry in any way which the local authorities might consider expedient. The whole theory, therefore, hinges on what High Court says in their judgment. I had no opportunity of reading privately or publicly this judgment. If the House will, therefore, permit me I should like to go through the judgment of the High Court first before giving any ruling on the point or any whether the motion is in order. I shall give my ruling to-morrow before questions are taken up.

## Mr. Chintamani's Cut Motion Carried.

After question time, the consideration of supplementary estimates was resumed. The Education demand was taken up first. Mr. Chintamani moved the omission of the item of Rs. 6,040 which was required for re-roofing the bungalow of the Civil Engineering College, Roorkee. In his opinion, it was not a matter of urgency.

Mr. Mackenzie, Director of Public Instruction, said that the bungalow had a thatched roof and its annual repairs cost over a thousand and it would be economic to replace the thatched roof by jack arches. The motion for omission was adopted by 43 against 38 votes.

The rest of the Education demand was voted in toto.

There was a prolonged debate on a token motion, the mover of which, Thakur Sardho Singh, Swarajist, urged that more money should be spent on female education than at present and that a portion of the grant to the District Boards should be earmarked for education of women.

Rai Rajeswar Bali, Education Minister, gave a sympathetic reply but the motion was pressed. The House rejected it by 63 votes to 20.

The demand under the head Agriculture was under consideration when the Council adjourned for the day.

## Adjournment Motion Disallowed.

On the 26TH JUNE the Council re-assembling, Rai Bahadur Lal Sitaram gave a ruling disallowing the motion for adjournment of the House which Pandit G. B. Pant, Swarajist leader, gave notice of yesterday in connection with certain interpellations regarding the "Pratap" defamation case. The President said he had read the judgment of the High Court Judges and also the correspondence that passed between the High Court and the District Magistrate of Mainpuri. The President read out to the House extracts from the judgment and correspondence and ruled that Mr. G. B. Pant's grievance that "the High Court having held that there was a "prima facie" case against the Police Inspector of Shikohabad a fresh enquiry into the same matter by the Superintendent of Police is open to serious objection" was not a matter of urgent public importance to be discussed in the Council. If any person felt aggrieved by the action of the District Magistrate he had his remedy outside the Council. It was open to any person to apply to the High Court in the regular manner asking them to elucidate their order. The High Court had drawn the attention of the District Magistrate to certain observations made by the Hon'ble Judges in their judgment for such enquiry and action as he considered expedient. The President observed that he failed to understand where the Council came in, if the District Magistrate had interpreted the High Court's order in a particular light and acted accordingly.

## Agriculture Grant.

The adjournment motion being ruled out of order the Council proceeded to discuss supplementary estimate under the heads "Agriculture Industries and Scientific Department."

Rao Krishnapal Singh took some objection to the provision for opening a new demonstration farm at Meerut.

Mr. Clarke, Director of Agriculture, quoted figures to show that the success of demonstration farms had led to increase in the cultivated area in the provinces.

The motion for reduction was withdrawn.

Mr. Chintamani moved a reduction of the amount provided for the appointment of 8

additional Deputy Director of Agriculture. The mover wanted to know why those new posts were being created.

Mr. Clarke replied that the Department wanted some men to work amongst cultivators in their own fields and those workers would be organised and controlled by these new officers. The motion was withdrawn.

#### Industries Demand.

There were several attacks on the Industries demand more particularly against the provision for an additional Assistant Stores Purchase Officer and a Manager for the Arts and Crafts Emporium, Lucknow. The motions for reduction were all rejected and the Industries demand was voted and the house adjourned.

On the 30TH JUNE the Council concluded its Nainital session and adjourned *sine die*.

Three resolutions were disposed of during the day but the only interesting debate was on a resolution moved by a Swarajist member urging that the Government should place the draft of the revised Jail Manual before a Committee, consisting of a majority of non-official members of the Council, for examination and report before it was finally adopted and published by Government. After a prolonged debate in the course of which the Hon. the Nawab of Chhattari, Home Member, pointed out that the revision of departmental manuals like the Jail Manual was the sole concern of the Executive and could not be entrusted to a committee of non-officials, the resolution was rejected by 42 against 28 votes.

### The Autumn Session.

The autumn session of the United Provinces Legislative Council commenced on the 29TH OCTOBER in the Council Chamber, Lucknow, with the Hon. Rai Bahadur Lala Sita Ram, President, in the chair, to transact official business, but adjourned shortly after question time till Monday, as the non-official members strongly protested that they had no notice whatsoever that the hon. the Nawab of Chhattari, Home Member, was going to introduce to-day the Naik Girls' Protection Bill and that in fact they were quite in the dark, until they entered the room, about the nature of official business.

#### Naik Girls' Protection Bill.

On the 31ST OCTOBER after a short discussion in which an interesting suggestion was made by Mr. Desanges to coopt two Naik women on the select committee, the Home Member's motion to refer the Naik Girls' Protection Bill to a select committee was carried without any opposition. The Bill received a hearty welcome from all quarters of the House as an attempt for moral and social uplift of a helpless and degraded community, which is exploited by interested people for their own benefit.

It is noteworthy that the initiative for this much-needed social reform came originally from the non-official members of the last Council. On September 11th, 1924, the Legislative Council adopted a resolution moved by Rai Bahadur Thakur Mashal Singh recommending that the Government should take steps to put a stop to the selling, buying and bringing up of minor girls for immoral purposes, with special reference to the districts of Nainital, Almora and Garhwal. The Government appointed a committee to consider the question and the committee was of opinion that legislation ought to be undertaken. The problem was most acute in the case of the Naik community of Kumaun, where members are, with some exceptions, in the habit of bringing up all their girls to a life of prostitution. It was proposed to check this immoral practice by legislation, to effect the registration and restriction of movements of minor girls of that community and separation where necessary of such girls from their parents and guardians.

It appeared from the speech of one of the members that a memorial signed by 27 Naik women has been sent to all members of the Council presenting their point of view in regard to this legislation.

#### Sex Bar Removal.

On the 1ST NOVEMBER Mr. Mukandilal, Deputy President, moved a resolution urging upon the Government to remove sex disqualification for women in regard to election and nomination to the Legislative Council.

The mover pointed out that similar resolutions had been adopted by the Madras, Central Provinces, Bombay, Assam and Punjab Councils as well as by the Legislative Assembly. In the Madras Council a nominated lady member had been elected as Deputy President. Several women's organisations in U. P. had also urged the removal of the sex bar. In the twentieth century, throughout the world, women were moving hand in hand with men in all walks of life. He failed to understand why the United Provinces should remain a century behind the rest of the world.

# THE U. P. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*From all members of the House, the motion received a hearty support, and was adopted unanimously.* [LUCKNOW]

*Babu Shyamal moved a resolution recommending to the Government, in its Transferred Hall, to increase the grants to the district boards for medical purposes. The resolution was under discussion, when the Council adjourned for the day.*

## Separation of Functions.

On the 2ND NOVEMBER Pandit V. N. Tewari (Nationalist) moved that the Governor-in-Council should take steps to bring about, without any further delay, the complete separation of judicial and executive functions. Pandit Tewari gave a long history of the agitation in this country for this reform. He referred to the recent questions in the Assembly put by Mr. H. N. Kunzru and the replies thereto given by the Governor-designate of U. P., and expressed a doubt if the Government seriously intended to bring about the reform. Two Secretaries of State for India had said in the House of Lords that they were prevented from carrying out this reform by want of funds. Sir William Vincent, as the Home Member of the Government of India, had stated that if any Provincial Government wanted to introduce the reform, the Government of India would not stand in the way. Accordingly, the U. P. Council had repeatedly urged upon the Government to introduce it in the United Provinces. The agitation in the Assembly and in the Council seemed to have borne little fruit. He hoped the C. P. Council would once again make it known that it was emphatically of the opinion that the reform was not only essential, but absolutely urgent.

There were numerous speeches in support of the motion, and none opposed it. The Home Member said the Local Government's attitude in regard to the question was well known. The matter was in the hands of the Government of India, who, he understood, were corresponding with the Secretary of State.

The resolution was then carried unanimously.

## Medical Grants to District Boards.

After the disposal of supplementary estimates the Council proceeded to discuss the resolution of Babu Shyamal recommending to H. E. the Governor acting with his Ministers, to increase the grant to the District Boards for medical purposes.

Rai Rajeswar Bali, Minister of Public Health, in the course of his reply, admitted that there was much need for increased medical relief in the rural areas, and said the Government were trying to do their best with the funds at their disposal. The Government had two or three schemes in hand, and were going to appoint a Committee to consider them.

Babu Shyamal's resolution was adopted without any opposition.

## Reclamation of Criminal Tribes.

Pundit R. B. Tewari (Nationalist) next moved a resolution to the effect, that the Government should take early steps to entrust the reclamation of criminal tribes to such social and philanthropic organisations of the faith professed by the tribes concerned, as were willing to undertake the work.

The Home Member paid a tribute to the excellent work done by the Salvation Army for the moral and material uplift of the criminal tribes, and expressed his regret at the wild attacks levelled at them by some critics. On more than one occasion their work had been commended by such men as Mr. Chintamani, Syed Raza Ali and Rai Lala Sitaram Bahadur. The resolution was carried.

## Censure on Police Officer.

On the 3RD NOVEMBER Mr. Govindballav Pant asked what action the Government took against the Sub-Inspector of Shikohabad, whose complaint for defamation against Pandit Ganesh Shankar Vidhyarthi, Swarajist, from Cawnpore, had been dismissed by the Allahabad High Court. Mr. Pant further wanted to know if the Sub-Inspector was either suspended or prosecuted in view of the remarks made by the Judges of the High Court in the course of their judgment.

The Home Member, in reply, stated that inquiries were made, and the District Magistrate came to the conclusion that proceedings against the Sub-Inspector were not likely to be successful. The Government accepted the conclusion.

There was a volley of supplementary questions, and eventually the Swarajist Leader gave notice of a motion for adjournment to discuss the action of the Government in taking no proceedings against the Sub-Inspector, notwithstanding a suggestion to that effect from the judges of the High Court.

Rai Bahadur Lala Sita Ram, President, ruled the motion in order; and said that, subject to the sanction of H. E. the Governor, the motion would be taken up for discussion at 4 in the afternoon.

In reply to a query from Mr. Pant at 4 o'clock, the President informed the Swarajist Leader that H. H. the Governor had disallowed his motion for adjournment.

This announcement was promptly followed by a walk-out of the Swarajists. The Council adjourned shortly afterwards.

Early in the day, there was a lively debate on the resolution moved by Mr. A. P. Dube, Deputy Leader of the Swaraj Party, urging the discontinuance of the system of appointing *ad hoc* committees for the selection of candidates for posts in the transferred departments, and recommending the appointment instead of a permanent committee, consisting of five members elected annually by the Council with two members co-opted in each case on the recommendation of the Government.

The resolution was supported by several Swarajist members, but opposed by the Ministerialists.

Speaking on behalf of himself and his colleagues Rai Rajeswar Bali, Minister for Education, said that under the Constitution, the Ministers had themselves the right of making such appointments but they appointed 'ad hoc' committees in order to benefit by expert advice in regard to the suitability or otherwise of the candidates.

The mover of the resolution wanted to deprive the Minister of the power of making appointment in their own departments. To this proposal, the Ministers, so long as they enjoyed the confidence of the House, could not consent.

Mr. Dube's resolution was negatived without a division. The House then adjourned.

#### Ministers and the Official Bloc.

On the 4TH NOVEMBER except for interpellations, the only business transacted in this day's prolonged meeting of the Council was the discussion and eventual rejection of a resolution which involved an interesting issue of constitutional propriety.

Babu Sampurnanand of the Swarajist Party, moved a resolution asking the Government to accept the convention that in all matters coming up before the Council concerning the transferred departments, including votes of "no-confidence" against the Ministers, the official members should abstain from voting. The motion was strongly supported by the Swarajists and Nationalist members headed by Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, Ex-Minister, and was equally vehemently opposed by the officials and Ministerialists. There were nearly thirty speeches, in spite of the fact that closure was urged on more than one occasion.

Mutual recriminations were not lacking. Mr. Chintamani was pointedly asked what would have been his attitude to the motion, if he were a Minister.

The mover of the resolution and his supporters said there was no such unelected official *bloc* in any of the foreign legislatures and expressed the view that the Ministers should remain in office only so long as they enjoyed the confidence of the majority of the elected members, in other words of the representatives of the people. That was in strict accordance with the spirit of the Reforms; and although it had not been embodied in the Government of India Act, the Joint Parliamentary Committee in its report and Mr. Montagu, in his speeches in the House of Commons, had expressed the view that the Ministers should not remain in office with the help of official votes.

Raja Kushalpal Singh, who was the first in the field on behalf of the Government, maintained that in the first place the resolution was decidedly belated, and secondly that it was not in conformity with the spirit of the present Constitution. The proper time to have established the convention was when the Reforms first came into operation. The Royal Commission was about to come out to India to examine the Constitution and it was not the proper time to make experiments untried hitherto in the country.

Khan Bahadur Hafiz Hidayat Hussain was of the opinion that the official element must continue to exist in the Councils in order to safeguard the interests of the minorities.

The Khan Bahadur was taken to task by his co-citizen, Babu Vikramjit Singh, who observed that whatever others might do his Muslim colleague from Cawnpore was sure to drag the King Charles' head of communalism in all the discussions in the Council.

Raja Sambhudayal was of the opinion that the resolution should be dropped, but brought in now and then to keep the Ministers in check and constant fear.

At this stage, closure was applied for and the President put the closure motion to vote. It was turned down by 46 votes to 34.

Mr. Syed Habibullah, a ministerial supporter, wanted to know why. If the proposed convention was good and desirable, it had not been suggested by Mr. Chintamani when he was the Minister.

Mr. Chintamani followed quickly and quoted instances to prove that he and his colleagues, were ever ready to resign whenever they found they had not a non-official majority behind them. They had never depended on official votes in order to remain in office.

What his attitude would have been, had such a resolution come up when he was in office, was a matter of speculation. But supposing he was opposed to it, then was not there the saying "we live to learn." The Royal Commission would not think very highly of the Ministers and therefore, of the supporters of it, if it found that the U. P. Ministers relied for nourishment on the Mellin's food of official support, and not on the mother's milk of the elected majority. With a full knowledge of the facts, and from his experience as Minister, he could affirm that the official members were not the supporters of India's progress.

Rai Rajeswar Bali, Education Minister, said he could unhesitatingly assert that dyarchy was not only an unworkable, but even a vicious system. If he opposed the resolution, it should not be taken for granted that he was in favour of relying on the official votes. Dyarchy had introduced factors under which it was difficult to form parties on sound political lines. Dyarchy was in itself defective, and the existence of the official bloc, with its voting power, was one of its concomitants.

Mr. Pant, Swarajist leader, asked the Education Minister why he should not join the Swarajists, for removing at least one defect in the "unworkable" dyarchy, by accepting the resolution. He failed to understand why the party system of Government could not be developed even under the present Constitution.

Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan thought that the purpose of the mover of the resolution would be well served, if it was made known to the coming Royal Commission that a section of Indian opinion favoured the view that the Ministers should remain in office only if they enjoyed the confidence of the majority of the elected members.

Mr. S. G. Jackson, elected European representative, was of the opinion that the existence of the European official bloc was essential in order to settle disputes between the Hindu and Muslim representatives in the Council.

Sir Sam O'Donnell refuted the allegation that he had ever opposed any proposal which was conducive to Indian's progress. It might be that his angle of vision was not identical with that of his critics. The particular proposition before the House, in his opinion, was demonstrably belated. If it was a constitutional impropriety that the official members should vote on a transferred subject, the point should have been raised some years earlier. Its importance appeared to have dawned suddenly, seven years after the introduction of the Reforms. It was idle to suggest that in the short interval which remained before the Statutory Commission was appointed an entirely new convention should be established.

The resolution was eventually put before the House, and was defeated by 50 votes to 33.

The Council then adjourned *sine die*.

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# The Burma Legislative Council.

The monsoon session of the Burma Legislative Council commenced on the 4TH JULY, its first elected president Mr. Oscar deGlanville presiding. The day was devoted to official business.

After interpellations the Finance Member moved several amendments to the Council Standing Orders regarding allotment of days for non-official business, claim for division and time limit for the speakers on certain occasions. The motion was referred to a Select Committee.

Of other official Bills transacted to-day the Bill introduced by the Home Member further to amend Burma Village Act 1907 evoked discussion and opposition from several non-officials. The object of the Bill was to revive certain powers of Deputy Commissioners which they originally exercised and which were modified in 1924. The Government were of opinion that this revival was necessary for the protection of the villages as most of the Village Committees were incapable of taking necessary steps, the system being still in its infancy. Discussion on the amendments moved were not completed when the House adjourned.

## Non-official Bills.

On the 5TH JULY, a non-official Bill and two non-official resolutions were disposed of. The Bill was moved by Dr. N. K. Parakosh to amend the Burma Midwives and Nurses Act, 1922, the object being to stop altogether unqualified midwifery practice in area in which there are resident a sufficient number of qualified midwives and medical practitioners to attend to the want of expectant mothers of all communities and their infants. The Bill was passed without opposition with a minor amendment.

U. B. Pe moved the first resolution, recommending to Government to take steps to translate scientific and other useful books into Burmese with a view to securing a wider diffusion of knowledges, also to provide text books to teach these subjects through the medium of Burmese in schools and colleges in Burma and to allot not less than a lakh of rupees for a good start for such work. In moving the resolution the mover criticised the present educational system, characterising it as unnatural, valueless and ruinous. It denationalised the people, undermined their religion, killed the literature and produced hybrids who were neither European nor Burman.

After some discussion the Education Minister, in stating the reasons for Government inability to accept the resolution, said that there was an absence of constructive information in the resolution. He pointed out that the Government had not deviated from its policy of encouraging the study of Burmese and the translation of wellknown literature into that language. The Government were doing all they could in the matter. The motion was pressed to a division and lost.

Another resolution moved by Mr. L. H. Wellington recommended to the Government that instructions should be issued to all the officials to refrain from unnecessarily interfering in matters pertaining to the internal administration of all self-governing bodies. The mover cited some cases in support of his motion. Government benches explained the cases cited by the mover and supporters of the resolution and the points raised by them. The Hon. Dr. Ba Yin, opposing did not find any proof of any unnecessary interference by the local officials and said that whenever the latter interfered there was justification for the same. The motion was lost. The Council adjourned.

## Capitation Tax.

On the 7TH JULY the Council discussed Mr. U. Ba Pe's resolution recommending to the Government to cancel the proposal to grant the exclusive right of manufacture and sale of "hlawzaye" indigenous liquor in Rangoon town district to one firm or individual. The resolution was lost.



Mr. U. Pu moved a resolution recommending the Government to stop the collection of capitation and "thathameda" taxes from the 1st January 1928. The mover referred to the report of the recent enquiry committee and regretted that the Government did not accept the recommendations of the committee one of which suggested that the Government of India should be asked to forego the part of revenues from Burma of the duties on rice, petroleum etc.

The Finance Member in reply said that similar resolutions were moved in the council on two previous occasions and the Government had pointed out that they could not do without this large sum of money and they decided to leave the matter to the Indian Taxation Enquiry Committee. After the report of this Committee was published in the next session a committee was appointed by the Government to find substitutes for these taxes. The members on the opposite bench declined to serve on the committee and so unfortunately the committee comprised of persons who usually supported the Government. The committee announced that the taxes could not be abolished but that proceeds should be devoted to the improvement of transferred subjects such as education, sanitation, public health etc. The same view was taken by the Indian Taxation Committee. The revenue from the taxes comprised ten per cent of the total provincial revenue and the Secretary of State had definitely ordered that no provincial Government should do away with a substantial portion of its revenue without his previous sanction. Burma was not the only province with this grievance. The impression that prevailed was that Burma was rich but an undeveloped country. Mistaken as this idea was nevertheless it did prevail in India. He opposed the resolution which when pressed to a division was lost, 28 voting for and 13 against.

#### Corruption in Judiciary.

On the 8TH JULY after an interesting debate on bribery and corruption the Council passed the following resolution moved by Mr. U. Ba Han of Tharrawaddy (North) "that this Council recommends to the Government of Burma to take necessary steps to make provision in the Burma courts manual to the effect that every judge and magistrate of all courts of justice in Burma should take an oath before the commencement of his judicial or magisterial functions for the day that he will administer justice to the best of his ability and will not be swayed by personal motives, or anger or fear or wilful ignorance." Official members remained neutral and the motion was carried without a division.

#### The People's Party's Walk-out.

On the 9TH JULY the Council concluded its sitting and was prorogued after the disposal of all Government business on the agenda, the day being an official one.

Mr. U. Pu, ex-Minister, made a statement on behalf of the People's Party and then walked out of the Council, followed by all the other members of the party. He said that during the regime of the late Sir Mg Kin as Home Member the party (Nationalist) he led was almost always in opposition to the Government. Yet the atmosphere of the House was very different from what it was now. The late Home Member and his colleagues made a genuine attempt to work the Reforms to success and in spite of the great differences of opinion the House fully maintained its dignity. But he regretted that that was no longer the case.

That was not, the speaker said, the fault of the President. The Government had caused the secession of certain members from their party and with the aid of those supporters had utilised the whole weight of the official bloc to stifle the people's aspirations and thwart their progress. The presence of the nominated and official members in the House was against all modern democratic ideals. The speaker continued that the financial policy of the Government was ruinous to the country, but no serious attempts were made to curtail the expenditure. It was clear that the Government had no regard whatever for the wishes of the people's representatives. Concluding, he said it was no use for them to remain in this Council any more or attend the next session in December.

After the withdrawal of the Party the House passed several amendments to the Council Standing Orders, some additional and supplementary grants and several Bills, including the Bill to amend the law relating to punishment by whipping. This Bill was in accordance with the recommendations made by the

Crime and Murder Enquiry Committee. The object of the Bill is to check the increase in violent crimes.

During the transaction of business the Finance Member (leader of the House) referring to the People's Party's walk-out, said that the allegations made by the Party were based on flimsy grounds and repudiated the charges levelled against the Government. It was only late last night that the idea of walking out got into their heads after an informal discussion between the speaker and the Party with regard to the business of non-official days during the next session in December. The spirit they had been showing, indicating their inability to stand defeat, would not advance the Reforms, but would rather retard them. He expressed regret at this morning's exhibition by the People's Party because of the very serious effect it might have on the Reforms in Burma in the future. The opponents of the grant of further Reforms would claim that the morning's exhibition was convincing proof of the unfitness of the intelligentsia of Burma, not only for a further measure of the Reforms, but even for the retention of the present Reforms.

### The December Session.

The Burma Legislative Council commenced its two days' session on the 13TH DECEMBER, business transacted being purely official.

The members of the People's Party, who formed the opposition in the Council and walked out of the last meeting were absent.

#### Sir H. Butler's Farewell Speech.

On the 14TH DECEMBER in the course of his farewell address to the Council, Sir H. Butler said :—

Mr. President and gentlemen,—

This is the last meeting of the Legislative Council to be held during my term of office. We have had five years of strenuous work together. The first years were largely occupied in dealing with political agitation, in suppressing a dangerous movement against payment of taxes, and in organizing a campaign against a widespread outbreak of crime. Thanks to the untiring efforts of our officers and especially of the police and the magistracy, and thanks also to the support of the Legislative Council and the public, the province is now politically quiet and crime is being checked and gradually brought under control. Murder is still very prevalent but other violent crime has already to some extent been reduced. The people are co-operating with the Government and there is a growing regard for law and order. The police force has been reorganized, the magistracy has been strengthened, real progress has been made in the separation of judicial and executive functions. The salaries of officials of all ranks have been raised. The Village Act has been revised and the remuneration of village headmen, who are the pivots of the administration, has been freely improved by a system of liberal rewards. Communications by road and rail have been greatly extended, the long wanted bridge over the irrawaddy at Sagaing has been commenced; an experiment, so far promising, has been made in the employment of prisoners on roads and in quarries; education, sanitation and public health have advanced; in education there are now nearly 10,000 more scholars than there were five years ago and the expenditure in the quinquennium has increased by over 75 lakhs of rupees; the needs of vernacular education are being met so far as funds permit; a medical college is being built and an intermediate college has been established at Mandalay; a big scheme for developing technical and practical education has been drawn up by a committee ably presided over by Mr. Niven; the extension of scout-craft and physical culture and the provision of playing grounds in Rangoon have been considered by committees ably presided over by Sir Benjamin Heald and Mr. Gavin-Scott; a beginning is being made in the development of our valuable fisheries; a large building programme has been accomplished; forest policy has been laid down and is being pushed ahead; in agriculture we have started new seed farms and are training subordinate staff preparatory. I hope to a big advance when we receive the advice of the Royal Commission on Agriculture,

## The People's Party Manifesto.

On the 12th September the Government issued a lengthy press communique in reply to the People's Party manifesto. The communique says :

On the last day of the monsoon session of the Burma Legislative Council on the 9th July 1927, the leader of the so-called People's Party announced that for the reason which he detailed, the members of his party did not propose to take any further part in the proceedings of the session, or to attend the short session in December. He then left the Council Chamber, followed by a few members of the party who had attended the meeting. On the 12th August there appeared in the Rangoon press, a lengthy manifesto issued from the headquarters of the People's Party, charging the Government with a change in the spirit of working the Reformed Constitution and enumerating several cases in which the Government had used official votes "to defeat measures brought forward by the people's representatives."

The manifesto concludes with a challenge to the Government to move the Parliament to hold an immediate enquiry into the manner in which the Reforms have been worked in Burma or in the alternative to dissolve the present Council, and call for a general election.

The manifesto contains numerous mis-statements and unwarranted deductions, says the communique. After dealing with some of the important of them, the communique concludes :—"The foregoing examination of the manifesto shows, that it contains many mis-representations and errors regarding facts which were within the cognizance of its authors. There is nothing in the manifesto to justify an immediate inquiry into the working of the Reforms in Burma or for the dissolution of the present Council and for a general election. A demand for dissolution is appropriate, when it comes from a minority which is growing in strength. It is not so when it comes from a minority, which is admittedly decreasing in numbers."

### Rejoinder to Govt. Communique.

On the 21st November the People's Party issued to the press a lengthy rejoinder to the Govt. communique in the course of which it says :

Notwithstanding the verbose statement of the Government, the fact however remains that, although the representatives of the people have been urging the Government to improve the economic condition of the people, the Government have been either lukewarm or indifferent. It is no wonder that we are compelled to come to the conclusion that the Government are reluctant to ameliorate the condition of the people, as such a course might clash with the vested interests of the foreign capitalists.

A word may be said about the walk-out and the petulant cry of "children" by the Hon. Finance Member, when the Opposition members walked out of the Council. The press communique made a subtle attempt to cover up this incident and made out that the enemies of Burma's progress would make capital out of this walk-out. It may be of interest here to mention that the People's Party is not the only party that has resorted to walk-out tactics. Last year, during the election of members for the Education Advisory Committee, when Mr. U Pu, the leader of the People's Party, was in the chair, Mr. Glanville, then the leader of the Independent Party and at present the President of the Legislative Council, followed the same tactics by walking out of the Council, and was followed by the European, Indian and Burmese members of his party. The walk-out of the members of the Labour Party in Parliament is known all the world over. Recently the European members of the Bombay Improvement Trust are reported to have walked out when discussion took place on the question of stopping advertisements in "The Statesman" If the intelligentsia of Burma is not fit for self-government, are we to take it that these European members are fit to govern us?

We still maintain that the Government have entirely failed to refute the main contentions of our manifesto, that the actions of the Government are not in accordance with the pledges given by Parliament and the best intentions of the authors of the Reforms, and that the Government have failed to improve the economic condition of the people, and have not taken sufficient interest to give financial assistance to the agriculturist.

If the present Government is sure of growing in strength, it should not be afraid to follow the steps of the Coegrave Government of Ireland to dissolve the present Council, and call for a general election as suggested in our manifesto.

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# The Punjab Legislative Council

Unusual interest attached to the proceedings of the Punjab Legislative Council for the brief summer session which opened on the 18th July in Barnes Court, Simla.

Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency's motion for a grant for additional police for Lahore raised a lively debate. Sir Geoffrey while speaking generally on the nature of the demands, had assured the House that these were mostly of a non-recurring nature, as the Government was conducting a stock-taking review of their resources and would piece together their proposals into a really well conceived picture of development before coming to the Council next autumn session. As this remission was the last of the windfalls they must undertake schemes with proper foresight.

Sardar Habibullah spoke strongly against the attempts to recruit Gurkhas and the like to the police.

Sir Geoffrey replied that the experience of Amritsar riots was that Gurkhas inspired a sense of security as they were found to be partial neither to the Muslims nor to the Hindus. Therefore, out of total of 350 additional police, 9 Gurkha head constables and 77 foot constables had been recruited. Of the remainder of 350 there were two head constables each belonging to the Sikh, Hindu and Muslim communities, and 84 Sikh constables, 122 Hindus and 67 Muslims. This was entirely in consonance with the Government's policy. As about 75 per cent of the police of the Province was Muslim there was a preponderance of this community. New recruits were mainly drawn from Hindu and Sikh martial classes on attractive terms and had semi-military duties.

Mr. Afzal Haq raised a debate on the motion for censuring the police for beating undertrial prisoners and volunteers on arrest during the Lahore riots. He was supported warmly by Dr. Alam.

Sir Geoffrey repudiated the charges and dwelt on the part played by the mover in the unfortunate events which were a blot on the honour of the House of which he was a member.

President: These charges cannot be preferred incidentally. The Hon'ble Member must move an independent and substantive resolution if he wishes to make charges against another member.

Sir Geoffrey said that this Khilafat organization was trying to revive its old tactics seeing their dupes in trouble and themselves collecting funds and disposing them of to their own satisfaction. (Laughter). He was gratified that more temperate counsels had prevailed at Lahore and that the people would not be misled by the cries of Islam in danger. Once Islam was in serious danger and it was the British Government that at Lausanne helped Islam. Could they not then trust their Local Government to see them through a temporary and purely local difficulty? The motion was rejected, only two supporting it.

## Court Fees Act.

The Bill of Sir Geoffrey to amend the Court Fees Act was opposed by Mr. Lal Singh and rejected.

Sir Geoffrey declared that the Government itself had not yet made up its mind regarding its desirability, but wanted to sound the public opinion.

## The Multan Riots.

Finally Mr. Maqbool's adjournment motion, which had been admitted earlier in the day, to discuss the Multan riots and the prevention of such riots raised very interesting debate. Mr. Maqbool was for a special measure to penalise the communal desperados.

Mr. Craik declared from an intimate knowledge of the past five years that the Punjab vernacular press was the most virulent, obscene and fomentor of

communal troubles in all the provinces and largely caused communal hatred. The more a paper lied the more it sold and he was convinced that all this was done for pecuniary gain. He wanted a definite encouragement from the Council and an expression of its opinion that the law must be strengthened.

Pundit Nank Chand assured the House that the whole province would welcome such a measure. Sir Abdul Qadir also supported the motion.

Rana Ferozedin and Dr. Alam held that public opinion must first improve, as it was reflected in the press.

Raja Narendra Nath was sceptical of the success of the proposal. Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency, replying to the suggestions made by several members for a Round Table Conference, said that the matter would be considered, but there must first be a desire for such unity. Press legislation, he said, would have to be of an All-India character. The motion was talked out.

On the 19TH JULY the Council despite official opposition carried a resolution of Chaudhuri Ram Singh urging that income derived from resin obtained from Shemilat forests of Kangara district be distributed amongst Zamindar proprietors of Shamilat. Mr. Barron and other official speakers showed that Government's treatment was generous as compared with those of their predecessors or of neighbouring Hill Chiefs.

Sardar Ujjal Singh moved a resolution urging efficiency as the sole test for recruitment to services. Interesting debate ensued in which Mr. Dulichand and others challenged this view. Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency re-stated Government's policy and the resolution was withdrawn.

On the 21ST JULY the Council discussed and rejected without division three non-official resolutions. Sardar Hira Singh's motion urging the release of all political prisoners was opposed by some who condemned those convicted of violent crimes.

Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency said that practically all non-co-operation prisoners were released while of Gurdwara prisoners, only six were left who could obtain release by fulfilling honourable conditions. As regards thirty-three prisoners convicted during the war they were very dangerous and therefore their release could not be entertained, the forty-one prisoners convicted during the Punjab disturbances were all blood-thirsty and dangerous and they too could not be released, for the last two classes of people the Government had not even a shade of sympathy. Sir Geoffrey detailed numerous releases ordered as a result of clemency on the recent occasions.

The other two motions which were also rejected were those of Dr. Allam who pleaded for extension of canal to Shahpur and of Dr. Nanak Chand who urged primary education through the medium of Punjabi and Hindi.

Sardar Ujjal Singh's proposal for compulsory physical training in all schools was under consideration when the Council adjourned.

On the 22ND JULY the Council concluded its brief monsoon session. Sardar Ujjalsingh's resolution urging a Committee to draw up a scheme of compulsory physical training in all educational institutions was replied to by Mr. Manoharlal, the Education Minister, and Sir George Anderson, the Director of Public Instruction, who were able to show how schemes had already been put in operation which, however small in the beginning, were intended in course of time to provide all the institutions with teachers who would supplement and even supplant the work of the drill instructors. Medical treatment, following up medical inspection, had also been introduced in six districts. In view of the assurance of genuine interest of the Ministry in the movement the mover withdrew his resolution.

Lal Bodhraj urged the appointment of a Committee to revise the pay of clerks drawing Rs. 100 per month or less with a view to giving them a living wage and stamp out corruption. Mr. Emerson showed that the last revision was generous and that the questions of individual hardships were continually being dealt with. The resolution was rejected by an overwhelming majority.

Before adjourning the Council sine die the President expressed grateful thanks to the Governor and Lady Hailey for allowing the use of the hall at great inconvenience to themselves.

### The Winter Session.

The Winter Session of the Punjab Council commenced at Lahore on the 21ST NOVEMBER 1927. After interpellations Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency, Finance Member, made a lengthy statement before supplementary demands were moved regarding certain investigations to which he had referred in July last. He gave detailed information about the progress made in those investigations and laid on the table copies of a paper prepared by Mr. Emerson entitled Examination of Financial Resources and Requirements for the Period 1927-28 to 1930-31 Inclusive."

The Finance member was confident that a study of the detailed figures would enable the Members to approach the Budget proposals, when presented, with that familiarity and sureness of touch the foundations of which rested in a complete understanding of the many complexities of the financial situation and which was the only sound basis for informed scrutiny and wise conclusions.

The Council then voted without much discussion nine demands for supplementary and additional grants.

Shaikh Mahomed Sadiq's amendment to the demand moved by the Finance Member for the appointment of ten wholetime stenographers for the courts of certain selected senior subordinate judges was ruled out of order by the President.

On the 22ND NOVEMBER, in reply to a question from Raizada Hans Raj, as to whether it was a fact that Government officials in the Punjab, especially those of the Police Department and the Information Bureau, helped Miss Mayo, the Government replied that during her visit to the Punjab, Miss Mayo met and conversed with officials and non-officials. No official help was given to her in the Punjab towards the collection of materials for her book.

#### Municipal Officers' Bill.

The Punjab Municipal Executive officers' Bill was severely criticised by several sections of non-officials on a motion of Chowdhuri Afzal for the circulation of the measure. Minister Feroze Khan Noon accepted the motion, which was carried.

On the 23RD NOVEMBER Non-Official resolutions were discussed and after four hours' debate only one resolution was passed and the other was under discussion when the Council adjourned.

Lala Gangaram moved a resolution recommending Government control of the sale of artificial banaspati ghee in the Province by suitable legislation, to which an amendment was moved by Lala Gopaldas recommending a prohibiting tax on such ghee by municipalities, town committees and notified areas, and punishment for the adulteration of pure ghee with such artificial ghee.

A large section of non-officials strongly supported the resolution, and asked the Government to undertake immediately legislation to stop the sale of banaspati ghee, which was undermining the health of the people of the Punjab.

Malik Feroz Khan Noon, Minister for Local Self-Government, expressed gratitude to the House for throwing very valuable light on the vexed question. Personally he felt that banaspati ghee was not conducive to the health of the average Indian, and it was a bad substitute for ghee. The question of prohibiting the import of the article was not within his power or within the power of the Local Government. In order to approach the Government of India for the sanction of legislation he desired some material to strengthen his hands, and he was glad the mover had brought this resolution. With the authority of the Council's opinion he would now approach the Government of India for suitable legislation to stop or check the sale of such ghee. He was also considering the amendment of the Food Adulteration Act in order to bring some sort of measure. The Minister considered the suggestion of the mover of the amendment a valuable one, and said he had already issued instructions to municipalities to ask dealers in artificial ghee to obtain licenses.

In view of the assurances given by the Minister, the amendment was withdrawn, and the original resolution being put to the vote was carried, the Government not opposing.

## Barani Tracts.

The second resolution was moved by Captain Sikandar Hayat Khan, which recommended that Rs. 10 lakhs out of the remission by the Government of India in the annual contribution from the Province be set apart annually for the next ten years for creating a special fund for levelling down land revenue in the Province, particularly to give relief to such Barani tracts in which the prospects of providing irrigation and other facilities for development are remote.

Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency, Finance Member, speaking on the resolution said that the proposition put forward by the mover deserved very deep thought as to what its consequences would be.

Mr. King, Financial Commissioner, quoted statistics showing that land revenue was already low in areas like Hissar and Attock, which were the worst Barani tracts, and he challenged anyone in the House to say that revenue in these areas was excessive. They were not callous to the requirements of the poorer zemindars, and everything possible was done for their relief. He thought the proposal contained in the resolution would not benefit zemindars in the long run.

On the 24TH NOVEMBER at question-time Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency informed the House that 14 martial law prisoners were undergoing sentences of transportation for life in the Andamans, and their probable date of release would be between 1937 and 1938.

Replying to other questions by Mr. Mohanlal, Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency said that the steps which had been taken by the Government since 1921 when a Committee was appointed to investigate into the separation of the judicial and executive functions of the Government and to make recommendations were as follows:

The Punjab Civil Service judicial branch had been completely separated, recruited and trained.

Magisterial powers had been taken away from departmental officers as recommended by the committee.

The Government had added to the strength of the Punjab Civil Service with a view to securing more rapid and efficient disposal of criminal work by magistrates. All districts now had magistrates who had been relieved of executive duties, and concentrated on magisterial work.

The Government did not propose to take further steps at the present time.

## Validating Bill Passed.

On the 25TH NOVEMBER consideration of the Bill to validate the imposition of the Haisayat tax by district boards, which had been declared ultra vires by the High Court, with retrospective effect from date of imposition, was taken up.

Mr. Mohanlal strongly protested against the motion, and said by taking the Bill into consideration, the Council would be stultifying itself and be setting a dangerous precedent.

Dr. Gopichand said that District Boards and the Governments had made a mistake in levying the Haisayat tax, and after the decision of the High Court holding the tax illegal, the Council should not try to legalise an illegal act, and rob the people of their civil right to claim refund of the amounts collected.

The motion however, being put to vote was carried, and the bill taken into consideration clause by clause.

Two minor amendments were moved by the Government which were adopted by the Council, without a division. The Bill as amended was then passed, the opposition not challenging the division. The Bill gives validity to the tax only up to 15th November 1927. The question whether such taxes should be permitted in future, is under consideration by the Government of India.

Earlier in the day, on the motion of Sir Fazl-i Hussain the Punjab Land Revenue (amendment) Bill was referred to a select committee after an amendment by Mr. Afzal Haq for its circulation for eliciting public opinion thereon had been rejected. The council then adjourned "sin die."

# The C. P. Legislative Council.

The August Session of the C. P. Legislative Council was inaugurated on the 4TH AUGUST at Nagpur with a lengthy speech from His Excellency Sir Montagu Butler.

Addressing the Legislative Council His Excellency said that since the formation of ministry everything has been settled down to get the best possible results from the constitution which the wisdom of Parliament has framed for the people of India. He surveyed many improvements in the Irrigation Department. He then referred to the Land Revenue payers who want to see resettlement done and he asked them to believe that it was no pleasure to Government to increase the payment which any one had to make for the common good. At the same time the right of the state to take advantage of the unearned increment accruing to the holders of land lies at the root of the fiscal system of the country and can hardly be foregone unless and until throughout India generally a new fiscal system is introduced. The Governor referred to the appointment of a Committee to go into the question of a medical college and to consider a mass education scheme.

Referring to the extension of franchise to women he said that female education was bound to influence powerfully for the future good of the province. He said that his Government has decided to close the remaining liquor shops in the rural parts of the Damoh District. He said that it was settled to take practical steps to promote the study of the vernaculars of the provinces in the University and the appointment of Professors of Hindi and Marathi were being proposed. He saw progress in the direction of unity. The old friendly relation between European and Indians had been restored. The tension between Hindus and Mahomedans had been relaxed and the friction between Berar and Central Provinces had been mitigated and he appealed for co-operation in this direction. He appealed to all patriotic citizens of this province to soften the relations between the Marathi and Hindi speaking areas.

His Excellency concluded his speech by referring to subprovincial differences in the following terms

"I know that there is a Hindi Marathi problem just as there is an Indo-European, a Hindu-Mahomedan, a Brahmin-non-Brahmin and a Central Provinces and Berar problem and that it has to be faced. All I ask is that in facing it each man shall keep before his eyes the duty he owes to the province as a whole and that the freedom of question and debate in this Council shall be used with an eye to concord and not to strife. And I would go further and ask each and everyone here present to keep in mind the claims upon his allegiance of India as a nation on equal terms with the other nations of His Majesty's Empire has always appealed strongly to me. No one who is not blind can fail to see the vast strides made in recent years towards the achievement of the ideal set before us. I do not know when the Statutory Commission will come but when it does I want it to find this province free from any bickerings which may impair its unity and ready to take its proper place in the wider national unity to which it belongs.

After His Excellency's speech the Council adjourned for half an hour and on re-assembling agreed to refer the following bills to various Select Committees :—(1) The C. P. Tenancy Amendment Bill, (2) Prevention of Adulteration Amendment Bill, (3) C. P. Consolidation of Holding Bill, (4) Probation of Offenders Bill, (5) Village Panchayat Amendment Bill, (6) C. P. Children Bill, and (7) C. P. Settlement Bill. Several members spoke on the last bill making many suggestions. Mr. P. K. Mehta said that the bill falls far short of the principles laid down in Joint Parliamentary Committee's Report. Next the Honourable Minister for Local Self-Government moved that the Municipalities Amendment Bill be referred to a Select Committee. The bill gave right of appeal to the municipal servants against the orders of dismissal etc., by the Municipality. This clause was strongly opposed by Rao Bahadur Kelkar, Ex-Minister and Mr. G. R. Pradhan for giving this right to municipal servants. Mr. Kale supported these provisions of the bill on the ground that there was a great need of protection to these servants. Some members continued their attack on the Municipalities Amendment Bill and pleaded for circulation to elicit opinions of municipalities in the province. The Hon'ble the Minister for Local Self-Government agreed that it was a retrograde step but held that it was necessary to have such a measure to protect municipal servants and assured the House that Government was not at all anxious to instal a Deputy Commissioner as an appellate authority. He agreed that the Bill be circulated. The House also agreed to circulate the Bill amending the present local Self-Government Bill. The House then adjourned,



On the 5th August the Council had a short sitting and after a few interpellations adjourned till the 8TH AUGUST when several non official bills were introduced and some of them deferred for publication to elicit public opinion. Consideration of some bills was postponed till next day to suit the convenience of the Hon'ble Minister for Local Self-Government. The House adjourned when Mr. Vidya's Tenancy Bill was being discussed.

On the 9TH AUGUST replying to one of the questions Government stated that owing to increase in duty on country liquor the consumption has fallen from 14,69,877 proof gallons in 1919-20 to 4,69,996 in 1926.

#### Basim Riots.

The Home Member gave details about the Basim riots. On the 10th July five cows were sacrificed by Moslems and Hindus organised a protest meeting. The same night five men presumably Hindus, entered the house of the Circle Inspector who was out of his house. One of these five persons carried a sword. On hearing of this the Deputy Commissioner, Akola, went with a police party and dispersed the crowd both of Hindus and Muslims who were armed with lathis and thus after restoring peace returned to Akola. After his return stray fights took place in which one constable, 8 Mahomedans and 10 Hindus were injured, four seriously, one having since died. Section 144 has been applied prohibiting the use of lathi for one week.

#### Tenancy Bill.

After question time the Council proceeded with the discussion on Mr. Vidya's motion to refer his Tenancy Bill to a Select Committee. Mr. Nelson, Chief Secretary, said that new amendments were introduced in the Tenancy Act only seven years ago and Government would deprecate tampering with the Bill within such a short period. All non-official members wanted that the bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion. This was agreed to.

The Council then proceeded to discuss bills which were postponed yesterday.

The Hon'ble Mr. Deshmukh wanted to recommit Mr. Chedilal's Municipalities Amendment Bill to the Select Committee but his proposition was negatived. Discussion then followed as to whether nominated members should have hand in the selection of members on Municipalities. The Minister for Local Self-Government was opposed to taking away of this right.

After further discussion the Council rejected Mr. Chedilal's amendment by 28 against 33 votes. The amendment aimed at depriving nominated members of taking part in the selection of members in municipality. The Hon'ble Minister for local self-Government moved retaining the clause providing for nomination of officials specially belonging to the technical side of service. The nomination is not to exceed the number of selected members and also is not to exceed one fifth of the total strength of the municipality. This official amendment was carried, 33 voting for and 29 against. The bill as amended was then carried.

Mr. Singar then introduced his Slaughter of Animal Amendment Bill. This was opposed by Khan Bahadur Gulam Mohiddin mainly on the ground that the bill was controversial and likely to create bitter feelings between Hindu-Muslim communities. But the house granted leave to introduce the bill.

Mr. Dick and the Honble Mr. Marten opposed the bill on the ground that the proposed amendment was unnecessary, as there were sufficient safeguards in the present Act. Moslem members also opposed the bill as unnecessary and likely to frustrate the very object of preserving cattle for agricultural and dairy purposes. This created some excitement amongst Hindu members and there were lobby consultations among them. The Hon'ble Mr. Marten pressed his motion for circulation but the house rejected it, 23 voting for and 39 against his motion and carried the motion to refer the bill to the select committee. The Council then adjourned.

On the 10TH AUGUST the Council after interpellations proceeded with the supplementary demands. Rao Bahadur Kelkar proposed a cut of rupees 56,394 under the head Revision of Survey Operations in the Mandla District. The cut was supported by Mr. U. D. Phatak from Mandla on the ground that Mandla District has been passing through a crisis owing to floods and no expenditure should be incurred. The Hon. Mr. Marten demanded a division and the cut was declared carried by forty-two against eighteen.

Rao Bahadur Kelkar proposed another cut of rupees 76,536 under the head Revision of Survey Operation in Bilaspur (Khalsa). Mr. Thakur Chhedilal supported the cut on the ground that the district was not in need of survey operations. The cut was opposed by the official members but it was declared carried without division. The third cut amounting to rupees 57,213 under the same head in the Bilaspur Zomindary was also declared carried without any division.

Mr. Ghanasham Gupta proposed a cut amounting to rupees 18,115 under the head Map Correction preparatory to regular settlement in Dug District in view of the Settlement Bill on the legislative anvil. Messrs Gordon and Helson stated that the amount was required for enquiry and not for settlement operations as anticipated. The cut was declared carried without division.

Hon. Mr. Tambe moved for a demand amounting to Rs. 9 46 under the head Civil and Sessions Courts. The demand was opposed on the ground that there was no pressure of work at Akola and other places. At this stage the house was adjourned for lunch.

After lunch interval the Council continued discussion on demand under the head Administration of Justice amounting to Rs. 9,426 for appointing additional subordinate judges to dispose of pending work. The whole demand was opposed on the ground that pending work could be disposed of by transferring some judges from one place to another and curtailing the number of holidays recently increased. The house rejected the proposed cut without a division and granted the original demand. The house then passed (1) demand for education Rs. 10,888; (2) Rs. 3,000 as grant in aid to co-operative credit; (3) demand of Rs. 7,38,122 under head civil works, (4) famine relief Rs. 80,000 to be spent in Berar; (5) Rs. 8,000 for public health (6) Rs. 1,50,000 for opening cattle breeding and a dairy farm at Ellichpur, Berar; (7) Rs. 2,29,000 to be spent on the road in Berar, except Rs. 10,000 to be spent for a female normal school at Amraoti. This too was granted by the Council after all amendments were disposed of.

The demand of Rs. 16,500 for electric installation in the Government House at Pachmarhi was carried, 40 voting for and 17 against. The Swarajists opposed this demand. This concluded the Government business of the session and the Council adjourned.

## The Assam Legislative Council.

In opening the July session of the Assam Legislative Council at Shillong on the 18TH JULY, Sir Laurie Hammond recommended the Goalpara Tenancy Bill and the Assam Local Self-Government Amendment Bill to the careful consideration of the members, and pointed out that the financial out-look had improved owing to the remission of provincial contribution, and that there were signs that the improvement of communications would shortly be taken up in earnest.

His Excellency congratulated the province on the result of its campaign against Kala-Azar; and asked the Councillors to consider the advantages of an extensive anti-malaria campaign. Referring to immigration and the resentment of the indigenous inhabitants, Sir Laurie said that the province owed not merely its prosperity, but its very existence to the immigrants. He counted it a signal honour to be allowed to follow in the footsteps of the great administrators and pioneers of the past and to do what little he could with their assistance, towards carrying on, and if permitted, expediting, the process of development.

His Excellency concluded: "Let us work together for the physical improvement and material development of the province while we see the light upon the hills, for all too soon night cometh, when no man can work."

### Progressive Reduction of Opium Ratio.

On the 19TH JULY the debate on Mr. Hatibaru's motion for progressive reduction of opium ratio to nil within the coming ten years was taken up. Mr. Hatibaru told the House that the very same resolution though worded in different language was moved by Rev. Nicolas Roy in 1921 as an ordinary member of the House, but 1921 and 1926 is a long period and many gallons of water have flowed down the Brahmaputra.

The Hon'ble Minister to the amazement of the House rose to oppose his own 1921 resolution. He showed much anxiety for smuggling and enunciated a model principle that with the reduction of opium ratio smuggling would increase. He admitted in his speech that the Excise Officers were aware of a vast organisation of smugglers. This was what he gathered from his tour in the plains. He admitted that the Excise Officers even knowing the experience of such organisations were utterly helpless in detecting them.

The most brilliant speeches of the day were those of Mr. N. C. Bardoloi and Mr. Rohini Kumar Choudhury's. "Was it not most ridiculous on the part of the Government who threw thousands of temperance workers into jail in 1921 to admit of utter helplessness."

ness against this net work of smugglers' organisation knowing who the members of this gang were? Was it not most ridiculous on the part of the Government armed with all the paraphernalia of law and order to admit that the Government who could engage an army of C. I. D. officers in pursuit of harmless political workers was powerless to deal with a band of smugglers or was it that the Government in their anxiety to derive profit from this opium traffic bolster up this bogey of smuggling of opium into Assam? Thus did Mr. Bordoloi and Mr. Choudhury heckled the Minister.

Mr. Rohini Kumar Choudhury also wanted an assurance from the Minister that the Government would not resort to a campaign of repression as in 1921. The resolution was carried and the division list showed 30 for and only 8 against.

After interpellations which were eventful with passage-at-arms between Mr. Rajendra Narayan Choudhury and the Finance Member, Mr. T. P. Chaliha's resolution regarding the compulsory registration of sales and transfers of cattle and appointment of registrars for the purpose was taken into consideration. The Judicial Member in reply admitted that the Government had under executive orders already adopted a system of registration and in the absence of any bill for the purpose he was powerless. The resolution after a full debate having been defeated Mr. Gopendra Lal Chowdhury, the Deputy President of the house moved his resolution recommending the Government to take necessary steps for the provision of sufficient pasture lands and to take to necessary legislation which was carried.

This discussion on the resolution brought to light the horrible grazing conditions in Assam, the situation in the permanently settled districts being worse than that in the temporarily settled districts where with the paucity of milk supply people fell an easy victim to all diseases. Tuberculosis like Kalazar had come to stay in Assam. After a good deal of discussion the mover of the resolution, however, withdrew in favour of another resolution which recommended only the formation of a committee to ascertain the necessity of grazing lands and to suggest means to satisfy the demand which was however carried.

As there was no special constituency in Assam for the graduates which had been a feature of every province in India under the Reforms Mr. Pareshtial Shome Chowdhury moved a resolution for the new constituency with an electorate for all the graduates of all Indian and foreign universities of 3 years standing. The resolution though opposed by the Judicial Member on the ground of absence of any University in Assam, was carried. After this the resolution of Mr. Brajendra Narayan Chowdhury recommending the increase of grants for providing funds to the Local Boards by 50 per cent was moved and carried and the Council rose for the day.

#### Waste Lands of Assam.

On the 20TH JULY the Assam Excise (Amendment) Bill, 1927 having been passed without any discussion the Council took up the resolution of Mr. Rohini Kumar Chowdhury regarding the appointment of non-officials as the Registrar of village authorities. The Rural Self-Government Act XX provided for the appointment of the non-official also in this post and the Minister ought to choose the best non-official worker on the line within the Province. The Minister-in-charge having given an assurance to be guided by the debate the resolution was withdrawn.

The waste land question was one of the few burning questions of the day in the small province of Assam which is overrun by the European Tea planters. S. J. Nabin Chandra Bardoli moved his resolution recommending for a collection of a list of available waste lands and for an invitation of application from native capitalists of the province. It was his intention that in the settlement of those areas preference should be given to the claims of the natives. European planters opposed the resolution. The Finance Member could not accept it on the ground of many difficulties that would crop up at the time of making lists of all available tea lands. The debate which was throughout uneventful and without any passage-at-arms was quite lively and many of the members taking active part openly accused the Government with instances of injustice. Earlier in the afternoon the President having had to leave the Chamber the Chair had to be taken by the Deputy President Mr. Gopendra Lal Chowdhury. The Deputy President on the Chair being apparently misguided by the volume of the cry for "No" gave a verdict against the resolution. When the mover sought for a division the division list showed that 24 was for and only 16 against it; only nine members of the Treasury Benches with 6 planter members and Rev. Evans the member to represent the backward communities voting against it.

The last resolution with which the Council rose for the day was that of Col. Smiles which as amended by Babu Gopendralal Chowdhury was passed. His resolution recommended that except in years of financial stringency a minimum sum of Rs. 5 lacs should be provided annually on the metalling of unmetalled roads in the plain districts of Assam,

At the question time Mr. Basanta Kumar Das referring to the constitution of the Shillong General Urban constituency asked :

1. (a) Will the Government be pleased to state terms and conditions under which non-British portions of the Shillong Municipality are held by Government? (b) Will the Government be further pleased to state the law under which the non-British territories were included in Shillong Municipality?

2. (a) Will the Government be pleased to state the law on the authority of which non-British portions of the Shillong Municipality have been included in the Shillong General Urban Constituency of the Assam Legislative Council? (b) Will the Government be pleased to state the total number of electors in the Shillong General Urban constituency of the Assam Legislative Council and also the total number of these electors who are residents in the non-British portions of the said constituency? (c) Is it a fact that the Hon'ble Mr. J. J. M. Nicolas Roy, one of the Ministers of the Assam Government, is a resident of the non-British portions of the Shillong Urban Constituency of the Assam Legislative Council. If so, will the Government be pleased to state the law under which he is elected as a member of the Assam Legislative Council? Do the Government propose to consider the desirability of moving the proper authority for so reconstituting the Shillong General Urban constituency of the Assam Legislative Council as to include only the British portions of the Shillong Municipality?

Mr. G. E. Soames replied :—

(a) They are not held by the Government with the exception of some areas of which Government have acquired proprietary rights. Officers of Government exercise certain powers in area under terms of the Sanad granted to them.

(b) By an order of the Governor-General-in-Council issued under certain section of the Municipal Act were extended to these non-British areas and all orders, rules, bye laws etc., made or thereafter to be made thereunder for the Shillong Municipality were declared to be in force in these areas. The powers and duties of the officers and servants of the Shillong Municipality were to be exercised in those areas and all sums received by the Municipal authorities in those areas to be credited to the fund of the Shillong Municipality. It has been assumed that this order constitutes those areas a part of the Municipality of Shillong.

2. (a) Rule 4 and schedule I of the Assam Electoral Rules on the assumption that the expression "The Municipal of Shillong" occurring in schedule I includes the non-British areas;

(b) 1509 and 1215 respectively;

(c) Yes. The Hon. Member stood for election under Rule 6 read with Rule 2 of schedule II of the Electoral Rules and was declared duly elected under Rule 14 (7) of the Electoral Rules.

The question of the constitution of this constituency has been referred to the Government of India.

Mr. Monowar Ali also asked a similar question and Government members were heckled with supplementary questions.

On the 21ST JULY the Finance Member's motion to circulate the Goalpara Tenancy Bill for eliciting public opinion was carried. The Opium Smoking Bill was passed.

At question time the Hon'ble Mr. Botham in reply to an interpellation stated that the rate of grazing tax in the Garo Hill was on buffalo Rs. 6 and other horned cattle As. 12 and in the plains districts it was Rs. 3 and 6 As. respectively. The high rate for the Garo hills, he admitted, was only for the control of cattle in the interest of goallas themselves. He could not deny whether private persons owning cattle other than professional grazors was also taxed and he would not inquire unless specific instances were given. Elephants which were generally fed by their owners with plaintain trees etc., had not escaped taxation and they are taxed Rs. 15 each.

State Prisoners.

Babu Farashlal Shome Chowdhury in an interpellation elicited from the Government the names of State prisoners in Assam the period and length of their detention and that the expenditure incurred on account of a Manipuri prisoner was Rs. 5-11-3 which had been debited to the provincial revenues.

In an interpellation by Mr. Brajendranarayan Chowdhury regarding mortality in tea gardens the Finance Member said that inquiry was only wasting of time.

Goalpara Tenancy Bill.

Next came the motion for the circulation of the Goalpara Tenancy Bill. Sj. Mukundanarayan Chowdhury, in opposing the motion urged for the postponement of the Bill owing to the fact that Goalpara might go over to Bengal at the time of territorial redistribution.

Mr. N. C. Bordoioi supported the motion. Born of the people and fed by the people he said he was bound to serve the people. Mr. Bordoioi said that feeding the fat of the land these zamindars had been rolling in luxury while their tenants were steeped in deep misery. These zamindars, barring a few, without doing anything to ameliorate the conditions of the people were spending their peoples' money in Calcutta. In narrating why the Congress candidate failed to be elected in the last election when he himself was on election tour he said the people, wherever he went, prayed for tenancy legislation. It was no argument, he said, to postpone the evil day only for boundary settlement to an indefinite period.

Mr. Barendranarayanan Chowdhury, who was himself a zamindar from Sylhet and the Deputy Leader of the Assam Swarajya Party while opposing the motion said that he stood there not as a representative of the zamindars nor of the tenants but as a judge or a jury and not as an advocate at all. He said huge prejudices would play a great part in the passing of the bill. He characterized this as a fight between Assamese and Bengali culture. He opposed the motion for circulation of the Bill.

Mr. Rohin-kumar Chowdhury while supporting the motion said that one in his life he had the occasion to support the Government. Charges of prejudices had been hurled upon them but could they be guilty of prejudices when they stood to serve the interests of the people. It was not a cultural issue he emphasised. He did not care whether the people took to Bengali culture or not. He did not care whether people adopting Bengalee language be Bengalee themselves. Bengalee or Assamese it was a question for the tenants. The prejudice was not with them but it was with certain zamindars, Assamese or Bengalee. It was a question whether the condition of the people should be improved at all costs. It was no argument to say that by certain clause power would be handed over to the collector. It was for them to see that the baneful clauses be removed.

The motion after some discussion was passed.

The divergence of views between the Leader and the Deputy leader regarding the tenancy legislation was much talked about in the galleries. Some European visitors asked whether the Assam Swarajya Party was in disintegration to-day.

Mr. Kameswar Das from Barpeta moved an amendment to section 11 which was not carried. The Opium Bill was taken up and passed.

#### Minister's Discretionary Grants.

Amongst the supplementary demands which came up for discussion during the latter part of the day the debate on the minister's discretionary grants was most lively. Opposition benches in criticising this grant said that the Ministers in England, the mother of Parliaments, did not get these discretionary grants. It was not a democratic policy to place in the hands of the Ministers an additional sum of Rs 10,000 who could by the vote of the Council bring in supplementary demands. Was it for the purpose of granting favours to own constituency?

Hon'ble Maulvi Sy d Sadulla in reply said that the minister was from among the people. The comparison of a poor minister of Assam with a British Minister was to compare the moon with a kerosine lamp.

The motion for refusal was lost as the Moslem party en bloc voted for the Minister.

On the 23RD JULY the business of the Council commenced with interpellations. Mr. Paroth Lal Shome Chowdhury put a series of questions with regard to an article published in the "Ananda Bazar Patrika" under the caption "Bangalal Abstarabad Dibrugarh Abatara," to which reference was made to one Satish Chandra Mukherjee alias Muktanand Swami alias one Baba living at Dibrugarh posing as Sadhu. The Judicial Member replied that the Government had not seen the article in question but after being told by Mr. Shome to be provided with a copy he assured that they would read the article in question. In reply whether there was any inquiry made by the police into the doings of the said "sadhu" and whether any complaints were made to the police from time to time against the said "sadhu" and whether the Government had any information regarding the antecedents and activities of the said "sadhu" prior to his advent to Dibrugarh the Judicial Member replied that the Government was not prepared to answer these questions and it would be a private individual to do so.

#### Members Walk-out as a Protest.

On the Government refusing to take disciplinary action against the Sub-Inspector Hamid Akanda against whom the Sylhet Sub-Judge granted a decree for trespassing the house of Mohammed Magfur, damaging property, tearing the Koran and insulting the women-folk, the Swarajist members gave a notice of adjournment motion to discuss the Government conduct in not taking action against the Sub-Inspector despite the Sub-Judge's stricture. Though the notice was handed in before noon, the President continually

put off the decision till 3 p.m. On announcing the decision, the above members walked out whereupon the Council dissolved immediately.

## The September Session.

When the September session of the Assam Legislative Council opened on the 12TH SEPTEMBER at Shillong, Mr. T. Chandhury moved the adjournment of the House to draw the attention of the Government to the statement concerning Indian widows published in *The Statesman* recently.

The Finance Member, opposing the motion, said that the matter was not primarily the concern of the Local Government. Further the member ought to have given proper notice. The President eventually ruled the motion out of order pointing out that neither the Assembly nor any other local council had taken up this matter.

On the 13TH SEPTEMBER Mr. Hatibornua brought in a motion recommending the appointment of a committee to enquire into and to prepare a list of all public footpaths existing from a long time and now included in different tea gardens and that upon the publication of the list the tea garden proprietors concerned be required to open up all those footpaths and keep them open for the use of the public without any restriction whatsoever. Mr. Hatibornua said that the uncalled for indignities including forced "salam," forcing down people riding on horses and bicycles etc. have been spreading deep discontent throughout the land and would surely undermine the very foundation of the British Government in time.

Hon'ble Mr. Botham, the Finance Member opposing the motion said that the civil courts were open to the public for remedy and that the findings of the committee would have no validity on the garden proprietors. He assured the House to postpone the resolution as the Deputy Commissioner had been asked to enquire into the matter.

Cries of shame were raised when the Swarajists led the charge with definite instances how Indian gentlemen because of their skin were put to great indignities.

Mr. Bardoloi in course of his speech asked the House to fancy the case of the poor ryot who had to pass through waist-deep water for more than six miles because the "zubberduyt" planter with a whip or "dunda" in his hand would not allow him to pass by the garden. He confronted the Finance Member on the question of legal remedy by saying that the bitter experience of the past had convinced the people of the land what sort of justice could the Indian get when they had to fight the European. Every man was not a Chandrakamal Bezborua or Boloma to spend tons of money in fighting the planter.

Mr. Rohini Kumar Chowdhury remarked that we should not forget that besides the British Raj in Assam there was the powerful Planter Raj before which many an omnipotent British officer would tremble and any officer having the audacity to go against the Planter Raj would have to mend his ways. He asked the mover not to forget that India was the land of "sallams" and any white man be he Tom, Jack or Harry must claim this as his homage from their subject Indians. He said that the planters were a determined people and they would never without a battle of Kurukshetra part with even a pin-point of land. He said the public footpaths through European gardens could never be found until he could find a path for Swaraj and freedom for India.

Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha also charged Col Smiles with definite instances of indignities caused by Europeans on the Indians which he could hardly meet. Dwelling on the political aspect of the problem he asked the planters to consider that they had been playing a dangerous game. The deep discontent which had been growing in volume might involve the country in bloodshed.

Sr. Brajndranarayan Chowdhury, Basanta Kumar Das, Sarbeswar Barua, Bishnu Bera and others took part in the debate. Instances were related in the Council which led to convince the House of the highhanded behaviour resorted to in connection with the use of roads. It was said that in one instance even the Deputy Commissioner of Lakhimpur was turned off by a planter. The debate proceeded till late in the afternoon. Closure was then applied and the motion put to vote and carried by 30 against 12 votes amidst cheers.

The second resolution which the Council took up for discussion after 3-30 p.m. was about the dismissal of the police officer concerned in the Majibhag Torn Kuran Case. The debate which was inaugurated by Babu Pareshlal Shome by moving a resolution was continued the whole day. The debate which was very interesting with many passage-at-arms had not concluded when the Council adjourned.

### Discussion on Supplementary Grants.

On the 16TH SEPTEMBER discussion on the supplementary grants was the main item of business. The Council by a motion passed on the 4th March, 1927, refused

Rs. 30,000 as a protest against the grazing dues. The Governor in Council on the 30th March certified Rs. 15,000. In consequence of the debate and of the allegations made in the Council a Committee with a non-official majority was appointed to enquire into the incidence of grazing fees. After the publication of the report Government has brought in a supplementary demand for Rs. 15,000 along with an additional sum of Rs. 5,000.

Sj. Kameswar Das moving for refusal of the grant criticised the report. Sj. Taraprasad Chaliha in criticising the report argued that the grazing tax was most inhuman as it is a tax on food in a country where 7, 6, milch cattle would fill per 100 of population comparing the statistics with that of the Punjab and the U. P. He said that these two provinces respectively had 74 and 68, 4 cows per 100 of population. Continuing he said that one U. P. cow was equal to 11 Assam cows and if half a seer be taken as the average yield of milk per cow about 12 seers of milk would have to be shared by 100 men.

On the 17TH SEPTEMBER the public galleries were crowded with both European and Indian visitors on the expectation of a no-confidence motion which, it was rumoured in the morning, will be brought upon the Ministers. The distinguished visitors included His Excellency the Governor. Some of the members who had been absent during the session attended to-day and it is said that they were requisitioned to-day for supporting the Ministers. The Muslim Party, at whose initiative the motion was to have been brought, was, it is said, not sure of their own party and the Swarajist, who were all Hindus, was one of silently recording their votes in case such a motion was brought. The expectant crowd of visitors were greatly disappointed when they were not treated to such a sensation.

#### Demand on Grazing.

The supplementary demand on grazing which was brought yesterday was taken up for discussion to-day.

Mr. Bordoloi in criticising the grazing dues asked what tax it was, land tax, income tax or a poll tax? Was it because the cattle grazed on the Government waste lands that they were taxed? Was it because of the large profits from their milk that they were taxed in assessing cattle? He asked the Government why it had not let the Civil Courts to decide who was a professional grazer?

Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha raised a constitutional issue and criticised the ingenuity of the Government for over-riding the decision of the Council by appointing a committee of inquiry constituted by the two members one of whom voted against the popular demand and the other slipped away at the time of voting.

Mr. Robinikumar Choudhury criticised the Government plea that the grazing tax had protected the indigenous people from the aggression of foreign cattle said humourously that the forefathers of the Hon'ble the Finance Member who had protected the Assamese from the Burmese invasion had now been anxious about protecting the cattle from foreign aggression. After a lengthy debate the Government motion was lost by 27 to 20 votes and thus the Government demand for Rs. 20,000 was for the second time refused.

#### Road Board

The constitution of the Road Board was the subject of an animated debate in the afternoon after lunch time. The Road Board as proposed by the Government is constituted of four Government members, the Finance Member being the President, two planting members and four non-official members other than planting members. By 26 to 21 votes the name of the Superintending Engineer was deleted from the Board.

Mr. Kuladhar Chaliha criticising the allotment of two seats to planters said the tea industry paid about 4.7 percent of land revenue in the Surma Valley and about 10 per cent in the Assam valley. The cultivated acreage under tea was about one tenth of the total cultivated acreage and the European population employed in tea industry was about a thousand. He did not see any reason to show special favour to the Tea industry and therefore he supported the motion for reducing the two seats to one.

The motion was afterwards withdrawn as the motion of raising the number of four to six non-official members was accepted by the Finance Member. There were sixteen candidates for the six seats.

In reply to the point of order whether the Ministers could vote on the election of non-official members, the President ruled that he would after consulting the Standing Orders see to this at the opening of the ballot box. Some of the members contended that the Ministers having accepted the portfolios were no longer non-officials.

At 4-30 P.M. the Council by order of His Excellency the Governor stood prorogued.

# Behar & Orissa Legislative Council

The autumn session of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council opened at Ranchi on the 29th AUGUST 1927.

## GOVT. AND HAND-SPUN CLOTH

After the swearing in of oaths the Council proceeded to discuss non-official resolutions in which Government sustained two defeats.

Babu Dip Narayan Lal (Swarajist) moving the first resolution on the agenda paper said that hand-spun and hand-woven cloth prepared in the country be purchased by the Government for office and other use as far as practicable. He pointed out the practical utility of khaddar and the economic possibilities of hand-spinning and weaving as a subsidiary industry for the poor agriculturists. Looking at the question purely from the economic point of view, he thought that the encouragement and extension of the industry would help to remove poverty in the country and the indebtedness of the agriculturist. He urged that Government should do its duty to the people by purchasing such cloth and thereby give a stimulus to the industry.

Mr. Tallents, Financial Secretary (on behalf of Government) replied that Government could not see its way to accept the resolution as it was not a practical proposition and would involve Government into heavy additional expenditure. Considering what the price and texture of khaddar cloth was Government did not think it practicable to use khaddar cloth in its offices. In purchasing these materials the Government aimed at economy irrespective of the origin of the materials. Specially at a time when there were other pressing needs, medical relief and education—the Province could ill afford to meet any additional expenditure. He mentioned that Government desired to do all that was possible to help the hand-weaving industry.

Mr. Ram Dayalu Singh, Swarajist, moved an amendment that where hand-spun cloth was not available country-made cloth should be used. He pointed out that when hand-spinning was considered as an usual subsidiary industry by Government there should be no objection to accept the resolution. He contended that the additional expenditure would not be much.

Mr. Swane, Inspector General of Police, speaking as head of the Department which spent more on cloth than any other Department, stated that it was not a sound proposition from the economic point of view. He was surprised that they wanted him to do what the majority of their countrymen were not prepared to do. There was the strange absence of khaddar from amongst the members themselves. Even Mr. Gandhi expressed the view that he (Mr. Gandhi) was distressed to find that several Swarajists disregarded his wishes in the matter of using khaddar. A satisfactory quality of khaddar at a satisfactory price was not available. He pointed out that he was at present spending four lakhs on police uniforms and if he were to accept the resolution he would have to spend four times that amount.

Babu Jagat Narayan Lal supporting the motion pointed out that one-third of the cloth worn in the country was supplied by the hand-weaving and urged that Government should make a beginning by encouraging the use of Khaddar.

The amended resolution was carried by 44 votes to 35.

## STUDENTS AND MILITARY TRAINING

Another resolution was moved by Babu Girindra Mohan Misra recommending that immediate steps be taken to make arrangements for military training of students in all secondary schools and to appoint a committee for making the necessary rules and prescribing the syllabus. The mover drew attention to the importance of the question of national military defence and urged that military training was essential to equip the youth of the country for it.

Mr. Faucus, Director of Public Instruction, opposed the motion on the ground of expense and pointed out that it would not be possible to impart military training to boys of tender age in schools.



Rai Bahadur Dwarka Nath, Mr. Baldeva Sahay and Mr. Misra Narayan Singh strongly urged the need of some form of military training in secondary schools and refuted the plea of expense.

According to Mr. Misra Narayan it would involve only two lakhs of recurring expenditure.

The motion was ultimately carried by 38 votes to 37.

The Council then adjourned till next day.

#### THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS.

On the 30th AUGUST—His Excellency the Governor addressed the Council. Referring to the recent Orissa floods His Excellency acknowledged the sympathetic message received from the Legislative Assembly for communication to the sufferers.

Although there had been a regrettable loss of life and destruction of cattle the damage hitherto had not been so severe as originally anticipated and crops had escaped lightly. The Government of India had been asked to assist the appointment of a small but authoritative committee of experts who it was hoped will show in what direction a remedy lies.

His Excellency referred to two cases of serious communal rioting and appealed to the Council collectively and individually to take up the task of eliminating the spirit of enmity which made such outbreaks possible and free the province from the curse of communal hatred.

Turning to the subject of provincial finances His Excellency asked the Council to face the facts. "The province is admittedly the poorest local government. The margin between normal expenditure and normal income is very precarious and the expansion in any direction must be slow. In particular expansion of local schemes and local institutions at the expense of provincial finances could not continue". District Boards and municipalities complained of poverty but district board income excluding Government agents had risen from 31 lakhs in 1912-13 to 100 lakhs in 1926-27 and municipal income from 31 lakhs to 43.5 lakhs in the same time while the total expenditure of district Board rose from 116 lakhs in 1921-22 to over 163 lakhs last year i. e., to a figure equal to more than a quarter of the provincial expenditure. In the same time government grants to district boards rose from 22.5 lakhs to 58 lakhs. In 1921-22 Government grants met 53 per cent of the Boards expenditure on education whereas last year provincial revenues met 92 per cent of this expenditure as well as 52 per cent of expenditure on medical, 14 per cent of the expenditure on sanitation, 78 per cent of expenditure on water supply and 13 per cent on that on communications. In the present financial position this could not continue and the only possibility of further expansion was the creation of local resources to meet the cost. His Excellency commended this to the most earnest attention of the Council.

#### USE OF VERNACULAR IN COUNCIL

After the Governor's address the Council discussed a resolution recommending amendment of the Council Rules to give members unrestricted right to speak either in English or Vernaculars. Mr. Hallet, replying for Government, pointed out the difficulties. There were different languages spoken in the province which could not be understood by many honourable members when they were spoken in the Council chamber.

Mr. Athar Hussain opposed the resolution and said that Ooria would not be intelligible to the Bihari members nor Sanskritised Hindi or Persianised Urdu to Mahammadans or Hindus. Babu Krishnaballabh Sahay in supporting the resolution said that they had to render account to the voters who could not understand English. They must educate the electors by broadcasting Council proceedings in vernaculars.

Rai Brijraj Krishna, the mover, in reply said that the arguments against the resolution would have been valid if there had been no provision in the Council Rules for restricted use of vernaculars which were availed of by honourable members. Many officials know vernaculars of the province. They were transferred from one locality to another and had to pass examinations in the vernaculars. They too would feel no difficulty.

The resolution was rejected by 44 votes against 42.

## ENQUIRY INTO EFFECTS OF FLOOD

Another resolution moved by Mr. Harekrishna Mahtab (Swarajist) urging the appointment of a committee to enquire into the present state of things in flood-affected areas of Cuttack and Balasore districts with a view to ascertaining the magnitude of loss and suggesting measures of relief provided some discussion. The Hon. Mr. Sifton on behalf of Government made a statement giving all the information so far received by Government as to loss caused by floods in these districts. He assured the Council that the Government were willing to allot more money from the Famine Insurance Fund for relief purposes on fuller enquiry as to the situation. He would himself inspect the affected areas soon after this session of the Council. In view of the information and assurance given by Government the resolution was ultimately withdrawn. The Council then adjourned.

On the 1st SEPTEMBER the Council adjourned without transacting any business owing to some change in the order of the official business.

After interpellations, the Hon. Maharaja Bahadur of Dumraon, leader of the House, stated that the Government had decided to alter the order of their business commencing with the discussion of supplementary demands for grants.

The Swarajists objected to this on the ground that they were not prepared to discuss supplementary demands first as they had no time to study them and they had come prepared to discuss official Bills which were placed first on the order of business. In order to give the members time to come prepared to discuss the supplementary demands first, the Council adjourned till the next day.

## MOTION FOR TOKEN DEMAND

On the 2nd SEPTEMBER official business was transacted. Mr. Horsfield moved that a supplementary token demand of Rs. 10 for the purpose of extension of contract distillery system to the district of Palamau be assented to. Mr. Horsfield stated that in pursuance of the recommendation of Bihar and Orissa Excise Committee, Government had accorded administrative approval to the extension of Contract Distillery system to Palamau and contractors had offered to construct warehouses and officers' quarters at their own cost through the agency of the District Board. Government having agreed to the proposal of recurring charges amounting to nearly Rs. 13 thousand for additional staff would be provided in next year's budget as the scheme would take effect from 1928-1929. The vote for the council was asked to this token demand in order to enable contractors to proceed with the work. Messrs. Baldeva Sahay (Swarajist), Jagat Narayan Lal, Krishna Ballav Sahay, and Kazi Ahmad Hussain (Swarajists) opposed the demand. Mr. Baldeva Sahaya pointed out that the new system would result in increased tendency among the people for illicit manufacture and therefore he thought that distillery system could never tend to reduce consumption. Other members also thought that the new system instead of reducing the habit of drink would rather help to encourage it.

Mr. Athar Hussain supporting the motion contended that the system would lead to reduction in consumption. The demand was ultimately passed by 46 votes to 39. Three members Messrs. Finch, Macgregor and Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Roy inadvertently went into the Noes lobby. Afterwards they represented to the president that they had by mistake gone into the wrong lobby and the error might be rectified. The president held that the mistake could not be rectified and their vote would have to be recorded in the Noes list.

## "NO-CONFIDENCE" MOTION AGAINST MINISTER

On the 3rd SEPTEMBER after a debate lasting for five hours the house rejected the "No-Confidence" motion brought against the Hon'ble Mr. Ganesh Dutt Singh, Minister in charge of Local Self-Government, by 54 votes against 37.

The Swarajists made the nominations to the District boards in the province the pivot of their attack on the Minister and expressed their disapproval of his policy in that respect.

Mr. Devakiprasad SINHA in moving the motion of "No-Confidence" observed that a popular Minister had been converted into a high priest of communal jealousy and sectarianism. He pointed out that there were numerous instances of nomina-

tions to district boards which called for explanation. The Minister had hopelessly mismanaged nominations. The speaker cited several instances of what according to him were nepotism and favouritism in the matter of nominations. He concluded with an appeal to the official members not to take sides in the matter, which was a domestic concern of the non-official members.

Khan Bahadur Wahab KHAN opposing the motion said there was corruption in the district boards under the Swarajist regime. He wondered how, while wanting complete freedom from the leading strings of the officials, the Congress party was expressing concern at the rejection by the Minister of the recommendations of the District Magistrates. The dissatisfaction expressed in the Council was based on personal grounds. That was why they did not want by the present motion to kill diarchy or oust the Ministry, but drive the Hon'ble Mr. Ganesh Dutt Singh alone out of office.

Mr. Jagatnarayan LAL (Independent Congress leader) also supported the motion, and referred to the Minister's ceasing connection with the Hindu Mahasabha and the Seva Samiti.

Mr. Sri Krishna SINGH, Leader of the Swarajya Party, in supporting the motion, stated that the power of nomination had been misused. The Minister had not been given a *carte blanche* in the matter of nominations under the Act. As a result of the Minister's policy the Swarajya Party had been ousted from the district boards. The danger lay in the fact that the Minister's policy and example might be followed by other Ministers. The Minister tried to promote the interests of his friends and to instal them in the gadi of the executive of the district boards. The speaker gave specific instances in which the Minister, he thought, had misused his powers. The Minister had flouted the opinions of the elected members of the Council. He had allied himself with the bureaucracy and had become a brown bureaucrat. Concluding, the speaker said: "You are the custodians of popular interests in this Parliament; and I appeal to you to consider the question carefully and give a proper verdict."

#### THE MINISTER'S DEFENCE.

The Hon'ble Mr. Ganesh Dutt SINGH said that nominations were made in the interests of the Boards themselves and not in the interests of any one community or party. He pointed out that no departure had been made from the practice followed in the nominations of 1924. In that year too, he had nominated members of the community from which large numbers had been returned by election, because they were suitable. There was nothing objectionable in that practice and it had not been taken exception to in 1924. In that year too, he had nominated a gentleman though a relative of that person had been returned by election, but there had been no protest then. In making the nominations, he had been guided by the suitability of the persons nominated. He had moved a resolution for representation of the minority and depressed classes and he had nominated them both after the present elections and those of 1924. But for some time it had not been possible to get suitable representatives from the minority and depressed classes. In 1924, he had to nominate a few persons to represent the Depressed Classes, because there were no suitable candidates. If he had refused to nominate civil surgeons and sub-divisional officers in spite of the recommendations of the District Magistrates, it was not to help his friends but to increase the number of non-officials. Civil surgeons were busy men, and they did not like to attend the frequent meetings of the District Board. He had therefore dispensed with them in a few Boards and wanted to try the experiment of relieving them of this duty in all the boards in future if possible. If the Swarajists could succeed in capturing two boards in spite of his nominations that strengthened his argument that a few nominations could not influence the election of the executives. In every case where he had been suspected of having helped his followers in capturing executives of boards, they had succeeded in doing so by large majorities. It was unfair to impeach the Minister because he did not lend the compound of his bungalow for holding a political conference. He had carefully considered the wording of Section 8 of the Local Self-Government Act concerning nominations, and he had his own interpretation strengthened by that of the Legal Remembrancer.

Mr. Attar HUSSAIN opposing the motion, said that Mussalmans had appreciated the nominations made by the Hon'ble Minister, because he had done some justice to the Moslem community. The Swarajists admitted that they accepted the principle of nominations so far as Mussalmans were concerned, but they objected to the individuals nominated. The Minister could not possibly satisfy every member of the House.

Rai Bahadur DWARAKANATH (Swarajist) supporting the motion referred to the untenable position of the Minister. He should have taken the House into confidence in dealing with such serious charges. He was surprised to find that the Minister was a changed man.

Mr. V. Narayana SINGH (Swarajist), supporting the motion accused the Minister of violating the spirit of the Local Self-Government Act. The Minister had forfeited the sympathy and confidence of a large section of his countrymen and he should not be allowed to continue in office.

Mr. Jagandhari Singh, opposing the motion, deprecated the introduction of communal questions in the House. It was, he thought, not proper for political leaders, professing nationalism, to make a grievance because this man or that man had been nominated.

On a division being taken, the motion was rejected by 54 votes against 37.

The result of the division was received with applause. The House then adjourned.

#### TENANCY AMENDMENT BILL.

On the 5th SEPTEMBER the Government motion for the appointment of a Select Committee, designed to introduce two important provisions into the existing Excise Act, namely prohibition of production of cocaine in the province and the raising of the age limit for the possession and sale of dangerous drugs by children was carried.

Mr. Sifton moved the reference of the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Amendment Bill, 1927 to a Select Committee. Mr. Sifton explained that the Bill was framed with the object of enabling mining lessees to buy from tenants and tenants to sell mining lessees such surface land as was required for proper development of their mines and to secure payment of adequate compensation to all interests disturbed in this process. The Land Acquisition Act was usually inapplicable to the needs of the mining industry and the amending Bill would help the mining industry to secure land necessary for expansion.

The opposition was directed to the motion for reference of the Bill to a Select Committee by the Swarajists, led by Mr. Krishna Ballabh Sahay who moved an amendment that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion. He stated that the Bill should not be hurried through and urged that the public should be given an opportunity to make further suggestions with regard to it.

The Government opposed amendments for circulation of the Bill. The amendment for the circulation of the Bill was carried by 51 votes to 35, a number of landlords joining with the Swarajists.

#### BEHAR AND ORISSA MICA BILL.

Mr. Sifton then introduced the Bihar and Orissa Mica Bill, 1927, designed to prevent thefts and illicit trade in mica.

In doing so Mr. Sifton stated that the demand for the best quality of mica had gone up by strides during the last 30 years. It was necessary to control trade in order to ensure that all available mica was put to the best use for the Empire. In Kodarma they had the best deposit of mica in the world. It was the duty of the Government to conserve supply and to keep the industry in a healthy and prosperous condition. Theft of mica had been for many years so prevalent and so extensive in the mica mining areas of Hazaribagh district of this province that the Local Government deemed it necessary to introduce special legislation. Unchecked theft had attained such dimensions that they formed serious hindrance to adequate employment of capital, efficient working of mines and proper development of industry which was vital to the Empire.

The Bill provided for licensing under suitable restrictions of all persons engaged in the industry and regulate the movement of mica within the mining area. The Council then adjourned till the next day.

## NON-OFFICIAL BILLS.

On the 6th SEPTEMBER as many as seven non official Bills were introduced including a Bill to Amend the Bihar and Orissa Local Self Government so as to embody Moslem demand for the introduction of separate electorate in the District Boards of the province at a basis of no less than 25 per cent representation.

Mr. Krishna Ballabh Sahay, Swarajist, moved the reference of Chota Nagpur Tenure Holders Separate Rent Account Bill to a select committee. The mover explaining the history of the legislation pointed out that the Bill was mainly designed to offer protection to honest co-sharers. It was not the intention of the Bill to jeopardise the interests of Landlords in any way.

The Hon. Mr. Sifton opposed the motion and the Bill on behalf of Government having his objections on grounds that the Bill was entirely onesided and unjust to the landlords. It contemplated to penalise wrong persons and it was unworkable administratively.

Mr. Devaki Prasad Singh, Mr. Nirsu Narayan Singh and Mr. Baldev Sahay Swarajist, supported the Bill on a division voting on the motion for reference of the Bill to select committee ended in a tie and by the casting vote of the president the motion was rejected.

## LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT ACT

Khan Bahadur S. M. Naim moved for the consideration of the Bihar and Orissa Local Self Government Amendment Bill. He stated that apprehensions entertained by Mussalmans at the time when the Bihar and Orissa Municipal Act of 1922 and Local Self Government Act of 1885 were on the Legislative anvil that without separate electorate adequate representation of Mussalmans on local bodies could not be secured, had come true. The result of the last two election to District Boards had amply justified these apprehensions. The figures of election returns told their own tale and Moslem representation on Local Boards had as a result of District Board elections, naturally suffered and that out of 43 Local Boards 27 had gone completely unrepresented. It was not in any spirit of antagonism to his Hindu brethren that he brought this Bill. But he had been compelled in the interest of his community to come before the Council with this Bill which was nothing but a protective measure to safeguard the interest of his community. The U. P. Municipal Act, the Calcutta Corporation Act and the Punjab Municipality had already provided for separate Moslem electorate and therefore principles embodied in his Bill were not new. The proportion of 25 per cent Moslem representation claimed in the Bill was based on Congress League pact arrived at Lucknow.

The Hon. Mr. Ganesh Dutt Singh Minister of Local Government, moved an amendment that the Bill be circulated for public opinion. He observed that he quite realised that the last two elections to District Boards had not proved satisfactory so far as Moslem representation was concerned. This had evidently forced the hands of Mussalmans to bring this Bill. As it was an important question and there was sufficient time for the next election to come there would be no harm in circulating the Bill for public opinion.

The Council adopted the amendment for circulating the Bill.

Pandit Shroshanker (Swarajist) moved for the reference to Select Committee of the Bill to amend Bengal Tenancy Act which also governed the relations between tenants and landlords in this province. He traced the history of various attempts made to come to an agreement between zemindars and tenants to bring forward a joint Bill on which Government insisted. Subsequently after their Bill had to be dropped in the first reformed Council. All such efforts proved unavailing. Hence they felt the necessity of introducing this Bill. His former Bill was considered onesided and hence the speaker had introduced in his present Bill clauses which did not find place in the former Bill. This would offer an opportunity to the zemindars to press their point of view. There was very great demand among the tenantry for the amendment of the Act.

The Raja Bahadur of Amawan moved an amendment that the Bill be circulated for public opinion. He said that public opinion collected in 1920 had become out of date. Besides there were clauses in the present Bill which did not find place in the former Bills and hence public opinion had no opportunity to express itself. There were important rights involved both of tenants and zemindars and hence representatives of tenants owe it to themselves and to their community to consult public opinion.

The Raja Bahadur further said that he was preparing another Bill and both the Bills should be committed to a Select Committee in the winter session of the Council.

Babu Devakiprasad Sinha, in supporting the motion for reference to Select Committee opposed the Raja Bahadur's amendment. He said that if the present Bill was referred to a Select Committee it would not preclude another Bill being referred again to a Select Committee in future. He thought that tenancy legislation was mainly concerned with conferring rights on the weaker party, namely, the tenants, and not on the zemindars. The latter could expect further rights on the basis of compromise by which they must give the rights to the ryots also. If the opinion collected in 1920 would be considered out of the date and if the passage of the present Bill were also delayed by the Raja Bahadur's amendment, a few years later they would again contend that the opinion elicited on this occasion had become obsolete and tenancy legislation would indefinitely be delayed.

Babu Bhagwati Saran Singh supported the Raja Bahadur's amendment which was opposed by Rai Brij Raj Krishna who said that not a moment should be lost in proceeding with the amendment of the Act. The speaker did not approve of certain provisions of the Bill and others had also honest differences of opinion on them.

Raja Prithvichand Lal, two lawyer members and Mr. Chaudhuri Nazirul Hussain also took part in the discussion.

Mr. Chaudhuri Nazirul Hussain supporting the circulation of the Bill for opinion observed that many subjects with which a Bill of this nature dealt must necessarily be contentious and therefore it was not desirable that the measure should be rushed through. He exhorted both parties to be actuated by a spirit to give and take and give up the attitude of partisanship.

Babu Chandreshwar Prasad Narayan Singh another zemindar also spoke.

Mr. Nirsu Narayan Singh (Swarajist) in a lengthy speech contended that there was nothing new in the provisions of the Bill. But if there was any provision in the Bill which was not found to be objectionable, it could be moulded by the Select Committee in the manner desirable.

The discussion was not concluded when the Council adjourned.

#### BENGAL TENANCY ACT AMENDMENT

On the 7th SEPTEMBER discussion was resumed on the non-official Bill to amend the Bengal Tenancy Act. The Hon. Mr. Sifton explaining the attitude of Government towards the Bill reiterated the view that Government stood for maintaining status quo unless either the relations between landlords and tenants became so acute as to call for intervention or there was manifest desire on the part of both parties for agreement. The present Bill, he stated, represented only one side of the shield. The Government supported the circulation of the Bill on the ground that the landlords were also bringing forward a Bill and that might give them an opportunity for joint consideration of the question of the amendment of Tenancy Act.

Rai Bahadur Dwarka Nath (Swarajist) stated that the Swaraj party considered this Bill a fair basis for discussion. They had not adopted each and every section or clause of the Bill. Their party did not represent tenants alone but their aim was to adjust the relations between landlords and tenants on a fair and equitable basis. He accused the landlords of dilatoriness in the matter.

Rai Bahadur Dwarka Nath suggested that the Select Committee would not sit before the next cold weather session and the Bill to be brought forward by landlords would also be referred to the same committee.

After some informal discussion on the lobby the Swarajists agreed to the suggestion of Raja Bahadur of Amawan that the personnel of the committee would be appointed during the Patna session on the introduction of the Landlords Bill. The Raja Bahadur withdrew his amendment for circulation of the Bill and Pandit Shishankar Jha withdrew his motion for the appointment of the personnel of the Select Committee.

The Council adopted the motion to refer the Bihar and Orissa Public Demands Recovery (Amendment) Bill to a Select Committee and agreed to the circulation of the two identical Bills to Amend the Local Self-Government Act for public opinion. The latter Bills provided for the election of a President in District Boards as in the case of Municipalities. The autumn session of the Council concluded to-day and the Council was prorogued.



Proceedings of the  
Congress and Conferences  
July-December 1927.



# The Non-Brahmin Confederation.

COIMBATORE—2ND JULY 1927.

The special session of the Non-Brahmin Confederation met in the Variety Hall, Coimbatore, on the 2nd July 1927 under the presidency of Dewan Bahadur Kumaraswami Reddiar and attended by the Raja of Kanagal and other noted Non-Brahmin leaders of Southern India. After prayers to the Almighty, Mr. Ratnasabhapaty Gounder, Chairman of the Reception Committee, read his welcome address, which was constantly applauded by the delegates.

Whereas on the question of entry into the Congress the President refrained from giving a definite lead, the Chairman in his address definitely committed himself to the view advocated by Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu and Mr. Shanmukham Chetty, and made a direct plea for the acceptance of the scheme as an effective solution of the non-Brahmin problems. Pleading for a wider outlook, the chairman observed that in throwing their lot with the National Congress they would be doing nothing inconsistent with their past or present policy or programme. As for communal justice and equal opportunities for all, the Congress had recognised that principle in the case of other communities and whatever might be the perverse obstinacy of the few communally-minded votaries of the Congress in this province, he felt confident that the non-Brahmins would get justice done to their legitimate aims and aspirations.

Continuing he dispelled the fear expressed in certain quarters that if they joined the Congress they would lose their individuality and that their organisations would have to be scrapped, and cited the Mahasabha and the League in support of his contention. Mr. Gounder reminded his hearers of the forthcoming Royal Commission when the whole country would be engaged in a struggle to wrench what had been denied to them so long, the blessings of Swaraj. Let not the future historians record, he declared, that in this great struggle our battalion stood aloof.

In formally proposing Dewan Bahadur Kumaraswami Reddiar to the chair, the speaker characterised Mr. Reddiar as a true servant of the country who had placed all that was the best in him for the best and lasting interests of his Motherland.

The Dewan Bahadur then rose amidst deafening cheers, and delivered his presidential address. The following is the text :—

## The Presidential Address.

Brother delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I can hardly find words to adequately express my feelings of profound gratitude for the very high honour which you have done me in electing me to preside over this special session of our Confederation.

It is now more than ten years since our great leaders distinctly realised that, under the existing communal disproportions of our Province and in the present state of its political consciousness, there could be only two political parties in this Province, the Brahmin and the non-Brahmin. The non-Brahmin movement was the direct outcome of this realisation. Non-Brahmins instinctively felt that the movement represented the

truth and rallied to its banner. Brahmins also felt the same and, in consequence, swore eternal enmity against it. Our movement stands for justice and represents and furthers the interests of 97 per cent of the population.

The other party, which is really a Brahmin Party, has been masquerading in various disguises and under pompous pseudonyms. It pretends, often, to divide itself into opposing camps and amuses the world by its mock-fights. It professes to be seriously divided on such vital questions as acceptance of office in order that one section of it might be promoted into positions of power with the Government, while the other, apparently opposite section, works its way into positions of power in the Congress. It has been our painful but necessary duty to expose the Brahmin in every one of these places, and dispel the illusion that separates the President of the Congress from the Executive Councillor.

Brahminism has acquired in the South Indian Brahmin vocabulary many synonyms—Swarajism, Nationalism and Patriotism are but a few instances of such. Examine anything of what the Madras Swarajists have done after the elections; you will discover the Brahmin in it. The destruction of the non-Brahmin, that still survives, is the object of all their varied activities. The Justice Party, which is the one great obstacle in their progress towards this goal, must be wiped out of existence. What else do the heroes of the great Brahmin Avathar, who is the Deputy Leader of the Madras Swarajists in the Council, mean? "If I am to be hanged for preventing Justice Ministry coming into power," says he, "I do not mind it".

Poor soul! What a great sacrifice at the altar of Brahminism! He, the great lover of Swaraj, would fain be hanged without living to catch even a glimpse of it in the horizon. He does love Swaraj, but he loves the extirpation of the wicked non-Brahmin more. May this Avathar fulfil his mission on earth before his annihilation by a rope round his neck!

As I pass along I shall endeavour still further to show that in our province, particularly the Tamil portion of it, Swarajism is only another name for Brahminism. The astute South Indian Brahmin, who has ever an eye to his ultimate aim, unscrupulous of the methods he employs, is only working out his end through the pliable tools of our credulous brethren. One by one our misguided brethren are returning to our fold, discovering the vile deception practised on them, sadder but wiser men, more courageous than the rest of us, to fight the battle of our emancipation. May God, in His infinite mercy, bring the wanderers, who are still astray, back unto us, their real friends and brethren!

I say, with a full sense of my responsibility, that the communal clique now controlling and guiding the destinies of the Madras Swarajists is the greatest obstacle in the way of National Unity and National Progress. They revel in the domination of an alien suzerainty. It profits them to secure its continuance. They know how to win the favours of the bureaucracy, to garland him, as did their worthy representative in Australia, and to try to get at him through the back door. It will not pay them to have Swaraj: communal monopolies will not thrive under Swaraj.

Speaking out of the fullness of his knowledge resulting from his painful political association with the President of the Congress, Mr. R. K. Shanmugham Chettiar, the Chief Whip of the Swarajist Party in the Assembly, told us the other day: "I make bold to say that the one man in Madras more communal than anybody else is Mr. Sreenivasa Iyengar," and he is the embodiment of true Brahminism. Who are the communalists then—we, who protest against the preponderance of one community and ask for communal equalisation or they who delight in its preponderance and make these frantic endeavours still to perpetuate it?

May we appeal to this apostle of National unity to begin his work of unification in his own Tamil Nad? As pointed out by Mr. Chettiar, it is difficult for the ordinary Madrasite to realise the seriousness of the Hindu Muslim problem of the North, just as it is difficult for anybody in the North to realise the significance of the Brahmin—non-Brahmin problem here. But we realise, in all its enormity, the magnitude of this question in our province. The Congress President himself had once realised it and declared that his first task would be the solution of the Brahmin—non-Brahmin problem of this Presidency. Why has he relegated the task now to the back-ground? Is it because he feels that the Brahmin star is now in the ascendant and it will not do for him to disturb and pull it down? It will not long remain there, we can assure him. Non-Brahmins may be fooled for some time, but not for all time. The non-Brahmin satraps, now ruling the province, will soon revolt against the tyranny of their Brahmin masters: "such disproportioned friendships must soon terminate in disgust" and disaster. Their thumb-screws cannot always be applied with impunity to their slaves in office.

Let the Swarajist leaders, if they have any sincerity still left in them, face the facts as they are. Let them not accuse others of communalism, possessing it themselves in greater abundance than they.

#### The Madras Swarajists.

In the tragedy of the political life of the Madras Swarajists, should it ever come to be chronicled at all, the darkest chapter will be the present one beginning after the elections of November 1926. At the time of the elections these political imposters went about the country, proclaiming from house-tops their doctrines of destruction and self-abnegation. We know,—and who does not know?—what all adventitious aids operated in their favour at the elections; how forces, nowise connected with their political creed, combined to push them forward; how their impoverished exchequers were replenished from sources of superabundant wealth. Apart from these rich contributions to their success from illegitimate sources, the glitter of their blazing label and the pompous professions of their faith, sedulously broadcast by a widespread agency led by their ill-gotten wealth, also contributed their own share. Their label of "Swaraj" was a catching one, was designed to carry with it the untrue implication that nobody else in the country stood for Swaraj, an implication that was fully exploited for the deception of the masses by the unscrupulous agency under their employ.

Again, the "de facto" if not the "de jure" organ of the Swarajists, "The Hindu," wrote on the 17th of November as follows:

"The duty of all who style themselves representatives of the people, no matter what their political label is, is clear: it is not to fish for office, which under the diarchical system, is not worth a day's purchase reckoned by lasting values, but to throw in their lot with the people by joining and accepting the lead of what is pre-eminently the people's organisation—the National Congress.....In any event, it is too much to expect the Congress to allow the Independents to exploit for their own purposes a majority which has been built up by the Congress by strenuous labour, and often in the teeth of the most virulent opposition of the Independents themselves. If, perchance, they (the Independents) surrender to the blandishments of the bureaucracy and the specious arguments of their supporters, the course which, at any rate, Congressmen should follow is plain. Nor need they await what the Governor does; for whether he plumps in for the discredited rump or cast in his net for a Ministry of all talents, Congressmen have only one course to follow. It is laid down for them as clearly as daylight in their election manifesto. They are in the Council, not as effective lubricants let the creaking diarchic machine function, but as the guardians of the interests of the people at large. There will be an attitude of unbending independence. In a word the Congressmen would constitute a powerful opposition, a standing terror to all the reactionary forces in the Council—whether these forces stand naked in their easily recognised shapes or strut in the masquerade of novel labels."

These authors were then under the intoxicating effects of their "significant and magnificent victory" and have lost their heads. With their wits about them, they would have never made these bombastic proclamations of fidelity to the election pledges. In a sober mood they would have, with their characteristic shrewdness, anticipated the demoralisation that was soon to follow and kept their tongues under control.

#### The Swarajists and the Ministry.

Notwithstanding these solemn pronouncements, the Sriman and his Swarajist followers have had the courage to eat their own words, and to use the felicitous language of the Sriman himself, "have turned round and betrayed the interests of the people" who elected them. A Ministry "strutting in the masquerade of a novel label" was formed, as events and evidence have shown, by the co-operation of the very heroes who, but a few days ago, were exhibited to a dazed world as a "powerful opposition and standing terror."

There were loud denunciations of benami Ministries in the Congress that soon followed. The situation in Madras had become by then as clear as daylight and the Independent Ministry had been installed in office. Yet no wail was heard even then about "the peculiar circumstances prevalent in Madras." Speaking on the motion for the deletion of the provision that Congressmen shall oppose the formation of a Ministry by other parties, the General-Secretary of the Congress said: "The omission of the words signified that Congressmen need not form a Ministry but could form a benami Ministry. That was the deception that the Congressmen should not practise." On the same occasion the Deputy Leader of the Congress Party said: "If there were office worth accepting, Congressmen would not put forward benami leaders who would accept them." And yet under the benign aegis of the very heroes who made these hypocritical pretensions of high political

morality, is functioning to-day a Benami Ministry of the most inane kind, fettered and enslaved by the real owners of the Estate.

Black enough is the crime of their betrayal: but blacker still is the concocted defence. A brigade of blood-thirsty warriors, led to the battlefield with heroic war-cries, were given the signal to halt, just as the battle began. They were told to lie in ambush armed in benevolent neutrality waiting to charge when the order came. With a conscious guilt of their betrayal the leaders prefaced this cowardly retreat with an apology which was no better. Let them speak in their own words: "We are here to carry out the Congress mandates.....It is also unequivocally held that the Justice Party had helped to impede the nation's progress towards Swaraj. We are therefore bound to act in such a manner as not to run counter to this verdict." The world has found little enlightenment in this statement of the Swarajist weather-cocks. Later pronouncements of these leaders have expanded this statement, but are in the same vein.

All this talk about the verdict of the country is mere moonshine; it is only the concoction of defenceless despair. The political morality of these leaders, such little as is still left in them, must have been tortured into submission before they mustered courage to publish this daring defence. It was counter to their numberless declarations, both before and after the elections. Their very leader had said that it was by their love of the Congress and not the hatred of the Justices that people sent the Swarajists in such large numbers. But consistency is no virtue in politicians: it is the hob-goblin only of little minds: "Honesty, however, is still a virtue even in politicians: and respect for the election pledges is but a piece of honesty."

Are the Justices such satanas as to be exorcised from the political world? Has the country given these sorcerers the mandate to so exorcise them? A party which has withstood for six long years the fierce onslaughts of various malignant forces has a good deal more in it than these critics profess to know.

The bogey of another Justice invasion into power is equally a myth. Our Party leaders had declared in the press, on the platform and the floor of the "House" that our Party would not accept office during the life-time of this Council. But these apostles of truth and honesty would not take us at our word. No wonder! They could judge others only by their own standards of morality and honesty. Having violated, without any compunction their solemn pledges to the electorate, how could they expect others to do better?

The feelings of the honest section of the Swarajists—in whom is yet left "the small voice within"—were however, outraged by this criminal betrayal and they raised the standard of revolt against the tyranny of a self-sucking clique. Their protest went before the All-India Congress Committee, and even the man in the street knows now what shameful manoeuvres were employed to burke an enquiry and let the culprits go unscathed, with a benediction on their head instead of the condemnation they deserved. The dullness of Madras midsummer has been relieved by the kaleidoscopic scenes of naked exposure of the Mylapore sanctum sanctorum and the demi-gods within. It is one mighty individual, an adept circus master, who holds the leading-strings of the Ministerial Jambas and the Swarajist lions, who have been domesticated by his magic influence into a most wonderful companionship for their mutual advantage (shall we add, and the country's welfare). Such is the revelation of one of the most distinguished Swarajists of Madras and yet another equally distinguished member of that party has told us, what we suspected even before, that while the Independents were in office, the Swarajists had the power and the emoluments thereof.

The Swarajist leader of the Andhradesa has confessed that, to the shame of his country, his followers have sold their conscience for a mess of pottage and servilely waited day and night at the door of the Ministers begging for nominations. Many have been the pilgrimages of the selfless Swarajist patriots to the official Mecca of the Blue Mountains praying of the tingods perched there in their temporary abodes for favours of varied sorts. With what avidity did the Swarajist leaders embrace that great opportunity of distinguishing themselves as the chosen members of the Irrigation Bill Committee summoned by the satanic rulers?

If they are honest let them vote for acceptance of office at the earliest opportunity and with their new label on go before the electorate once again proclaiming that they are only their old friends, now unmasked and undisguised. If they come again, let them rule the country. If not, let others rule it. Let them live or let live.

These crest-fallen heroes have no choice but to be dumb. They have set up dummies in office, who play only to "The Master's Voice" coming from behind the screen. The spectre of the Justice Ministry is ever before their eyes. Nothing should be attempted which might, in the least, disturb the present dumb-show, lest the spectre should walk

in again. These were the watch dogs of all popular rights and freedom in the country. What have they become now? They are the watch-dogs of liberties elsewhere, regardless of the slavery at home. May I say in words borrowed of a very thoughtful writer "Never varnish your all too patent hypocrisy at home with this incredible tenderness for foreign f ' a thousand miles off".

Let our opponents glory in our so-called defeat; but we recognise in the result of the elections only a blessing in disguise. In the present Council we are the only party and the only opposition. The Independents, the post-election political mushrooms, are no party at all. That best disciplined party in the world, the Swarajists, are torn now into as many divisions as there are men amongst them. The Justices are the one party remaining in the Council, subject to discipline and guided by principles.

The Swarajists' dread of a dissolution of the Council is another proof of the most convincing kind that the country is with us to-day. It behoves our leaders to keep this enthusiasm burning by organised propaganda, and to feed it with programmes of intensive constructive work lest it perish from ennui.

So much has been said, and in such varied forms, about the Independents and their Ministry that it seems needless to say much more. Placed in office by misguided authority, they are there: If they continue there longer than constitutional honesty and self-respect would permit, what better can you expect of these creatures of Swarajist hypocrisy? The public would have left them alone regarding them as more worthy of pity than of wrath. But dressed in a little brief authority and painfully conscious of it, they are fighting recklessly against time, and darkening the pages of their administration with an incredible speed. Their mal-administration, their nepotism and other abuses of their power and patronage have reached a stage beyond which they can scarcely go. Their precepts and their practices differ as widely from one another as do those of their Swarajist masters. Principles which they boastfully preached in the Council in March last have been thrown to the winds: and true to their name they are indeed working independent of all honesty and principles.

#### Rural Reconstruction.

Among the nation-building activities that our party should undertake, I will give a place of no mean importance to the work of rural reconstruction. Ninety per cent of our population inhabit the rural areas: it can be said of our country, with perfect truth, that "the nation lives in the village." But all the modern reforms have yet scarcely touched the villager. A large proportion of our rural fellow citizens are still beset "with poverty" and misery "of a kind which finds no parallel" elsewhere. Says the Mahatmaji: "The semi-starved masses of India are slowly sinking to lifelessness.....No sophistry, no juggling in figures can explain away the skeletons in many villages.....Both England and the town-dweller of India will have to answer, if there is a God above, for this crime against humanity, which is perhaps unequalled in history." Words cannot picture in a more appealing form the misery of the rural masses. There are millions among them who "go through life on insufficient food." The rest of them suffer all the miseries of a primitive age. Education has not spread among them. They have none of the amenities of modern life. Their villages are not connected with the centres of civilisation or of production or consumption. They have neither an adequate water-supply nor any medical-relief. The tale of their misery is an old but a never-ending one.

It must be the aim of all true patriotism to relieve the villager of his miserable poverty and suffering and of his colossal ignorance. True national advance can be achieved only then. The flying columns of urban intellect that are marching far ahead of the rural ranks do but ill-represent the strength or our political forces.

It is sad to see that the Government of the country have not yet applied themselves, in sufficient earnestness, to this question of rural amelioration. Their energies are still being exhausted by compilations of tables and "juggling in figures" to demonstrate to their masters in England that India is advancing in prosperity, as judged by their miscalculated averages of the daily income of an Indian citizen. Let their labours, instead of being wasted on such endeavours to prove that black is white, be turned towards some substantial and thoughtful schemes of constructive work to relieve the sufferings that we every day see with our eyes. May I, in all humility, point out to the Government that the security of all constitutional Government in India lies in the innate conservatism of the villager. Sinn Feinism is only a recent product of the city and has not touched him. His welfare and his contentment must therefore be among the first concerns of any wise Government. His political consciousness is fast awakening, and there are already unmistakable indications of his revolt against the apathy of the Government and the selfishness of the town-dweller.

The Hon. Mr. Ranganatha Mudaliar has earned the gratitude of the public of this province by the recent announcement of his private efforts towards the organisation of such a fund and the handsome contribution that he proposes to make for it. Let us hope that his worthy example will be followed by the Government of which he is at present, a member.

It is our paramount duty to undertake an intense propaganda for educating and helping the villager to adequately realise his present situation, and to recognise who his real friends are. We should instil into him an abiding faith in our devotion to his welfare and not allow him to be misguided by the eloquent professions of mere lip sympathy made by self-seeking politicians engaged only in safe-guarding their own position of advantage, unmindful of the interests of the peasant and the labourer.

#### Other Constructive Work.

"Untouchability is the greatest curse of India," say our Swarajist patriots. But have they stirred yet their little finger to remove that curse? How many of these apostles of love and sacrifice have gone to the numerous Aghrahams of South India still prohibiting the untouchables from entering their streets and preached from the street corners to their Brahmin brethren there that the Adi Dravida is a brother-citizen of his, born of the same mother-land and with equal birth-rights, and that it is a sin against God and the country to forbid his entry into their streets? Let our Brahmin Swarajist friends start this preaching first and come out of it unscathed, before they expect us to accept their professions of interest and sympathy in this question. Let us leave them to their platform and their press : and concentrate our own action and organise it better than now. "Untouchability is no formidable obstacle to Swaraj," declared the President of the Congress of 1926. Let the Mahatma speak in reply, for this is what he has said : "Untouchability is another hindrance to Swaraj. Its removal is just as essential for Swaraj as the attainment of Hindu-Moslem unity." Let us not live in the fool's paradise of the Brahmin Swarajists, but carry on our battles in the way shown to us by the Vaikom Satyagrahis, and fighting with the irresistible force of our determination, restore to their liberty the millions of our suppressed brethren.

We are not exhibiting yet towards Khaddar that unbounded enthusiasm characteristic of all recent converts to a new faith. With a non-political organisation—the All-India Spinners' Association now in charge of it—it has gone out of the field of party politics : and it behoves us all to promote the production and wearing of Khaddar as a sound economical proposition in our present state of depression.

Total prohibition is our declared goal and we must reiterate, with increased emphasis, our demand for it both inside and outside the Legislative Council, and cultivate, at the same time, in the country a feeling of general repulsion against liquor among the classes now addicted to it, and thus create an atmosphere helpful to our speedy attainment of the goal.

#### Public Services.

Writing about the unredeemed promises of England in regard to the Indianisation of the Civil and Military Services of India, Dr. Rutherford, in his recent book on "Modern India," says : "Apologists for Great Britain dishonouring her promises and agreements point to the recent recommendations of the Lee Commission . . . . But the apologists neglect to state that, with rare exceptions, the superior posts, the best paid appointments are still reserved for Britons and that Indians are excluded from administering their own country for no other reason than that they do not belong to the ruling race."

"For this great inequality of treatment and for this lamentable denial of justice, of partnership and co-operation, the same apologists trump up the excuse of efficiency pretending that Britons are more efficient than Indians . . . . The efficiency in exploitations, in which Britons pre-eminently excel, is one of the chief causes of Indian poverty, and the sooner India is rid of British efficiency the sooner she will recover financially and morally."

Dewan Bahadur Krishnan Nair, in his Presidential Address at the Tanjore Non-Brahmin Conference, said : "If there is one clique more than another which clamours for appointments it is the clique consisting of the representatives of the European Association who are ever on the watch to secure jobs for their own kith and kin." In answer to this, the "Madras Mail" asked if ever Europeans sought for jobs irrespective of efficiency : and here is the reply in the words of a Britisher : "Indians are excluded from administering their own country for no other reason than that they do not belong to the ruling race." Pretensions apart, we are all job-hunters—our traducers more than ourselves : nobody need be ashamed to confess it and be frightened by the sneers of

interested critics engaged in the same pursuit though not by the same honourable and open means.

What Dr. Rutherford wrote of Indianisation applies with equal force to the de-Brahminisation of our public services. The sooner we are rid of Brahmin efficiency, the sooner will we recover politically and morally. Is this bogey of Brahmin efficiency fated ever to die? It occasionally disappears for a while, but struts up again, in increased vigour, with a change of the political or official atmosphere in its favour.

Is there to be no end to this iniquitous communal reign? Has justice been banished from our benighted land? Were our present methods of protest to prove fruitless? Public opinion will not take all this humiliation lying low and will assert itself in more effective ways. Let the Government note that, in denying us our legitimate share of office and power, they are pricking us at a most painful and deep-seated sore in our minds, and it is hardly necessary for me to say that they cannot do it with impunity.

The Staff Selection Board, which has made its contribution to the purification of the Public Services, is proposed to be replaced by a Provincial Commission, which will only be a costlier reproduction of this body. It has been already proclaimed by an impartial news agency that its constitution will be non-communal, and we know what these words signify.

This Commission will be only an additional burden to the tax-payer without any corresponding advantage. At a modest calculation, it will cause an expenditure of at least 2 lakhs a year. Already low voices of protest are heard against this costly appointment for making appointments; and we hope that when the time comes, the protest would become loud and organised enough to nip this scheme in the bud.

#### Justicites and the Congress.

There remains now the burning question of the day—the question of the advisability of the members of our party joining the Indian National Congress and dislodging, if possible, the narrow communal clique which now controls its executive. The question has to be examined anxiously and in all its bearings. All possible developments should be foreseen, so far as human foresight can reach, and corresponding lines of action chalked out in advance. Remember, Gentlemen, that we, Justicites, cannot afford to put our hands to the plough and then look back.

The first question that confronts us in considering the problem is this: In the event of our joining the Congress, what is to become of our own organisation and what is to be our relationship to it? The easy answer that suggests itself is that the South Indian Liberal Federation shall stand to the non-Brahmins of this Province in the same position, as the All-India Muslim League occupies with reference to the Muslims, and the Hindu Maha Sabha with reference to the Hindus of Northern India. This analogy perhaps overlooks a sharp distinction. Neither the Muslim League nor the Hindu Sabha appears to impose any definite political faith on their members. The only tie that binds their members together is the allegiance to a common religion and the need for concerted action, whenever the interests of these religionists are threatened. On their rolls may at once be found the most revolutionary and the most reactionary of politicians, with exponents of all the intermediate political faiths thrown in between these irreconcilable extremes. The same is true of the numerous Hindu, Christian and Muslim communal bodies of our own Presidency. The position of our organisation is different. Members of the South Indian Liberal Federation are bound to one another not only by ties of common communal interests but also by a living political and social faith. Justice is our Watchword—Justice political, social and economic. The main articles of our faith embodied in our creed, in the proceedings of our Confederation, and the pronouncements of our leaders, may be summed up in a few sentences. We believe that no form of Government can be accepted as satisfactory in our country, which does not guarantee to every community its due share of power and responsibility. The responsible Government which we are after is not that counterfeit article which satisfies the theorist but benefits only the monopolist, but the embodiment of genuine democracy, whose benefits all the communities of the country will equally enjoy. As I have said before, communal representation is the expedient that we advocate towards that end.

Secondly, we believe that what we call our "Hindu Social Order," has become so thoroughly out of date, and so entirely devoid of meaning and purpose in its arrangements, that it ought to-day to be more correctly described as "the Hindu Social Disorder." It tends not towards mutual co-operation and trust between communities, but towards mutual antagonism and distrust. Its arrangements have the effect of offending against the self-respect of every community except the Brahmin. We stand for the removal of all those conditions under which one Hindu, may by reason of the accident of birth,

look upon his brother-Hindu as his inferior. Natural corollaries of his proposition are the breaking of the monopoly of a particular caste to rights of priesthood, the removal of untouchability, and other movements of a similar kind.

In regard to the Mont-Ford Reforms, we have consistently taken the position that they ought to be worked for what they are worth, firstly, because we could by that means render to our people such good as the reforms may yield, and secondly because by successfully working them, we could effectively knock the bottom out of the argument of those who pretend to hold that India is not fit to govern herself.

This outline sketched of the main principles for which our Party stands enables us to see where we differ from the current politics of the Indian National Congress. "Congress Entry" ought not to mean freedom for the members of our party to adopt any of the present political principles of the Indian National Congress, which violate the fundamental doctrines of our movement: nothing should be tolerated which would impair the solidarity and sanctity of our present situation, and that is happily the universal feeling everywhere. Safe-guards adequate for this purpose should be devised, if Congress Entry is resolved upon.

One of the main objects for which Congress Entry is advocated is to capture the Congress and utilise it for the more effectual propagation of the gospel of our Party. You remember that we captured the Legislative Council, and used it for six years as our instrument for the betterment of the people. We have been able to do a great deal by that means towards carrying our ideal into practice, and improving the lot of our fellow citizens. Why should we not, in a similar way, ask the advocates of Congress Entry, to try to capture the Indian National Congress and utilise it as our instrument for the benefit of the country?

The question is: Is it necessary? Is it worth while? The answer given by our pro-entry friends is in the affirmative and for these reasons. The first is: For more than a generation the best men in India have given their best to the Indian National Congress and have built for it a prestige and a reputation which, in spite of all the mismanagement and false-dealing to which it has been subjected during recent years, still stand very high in India and abroad. It may be an advantage for us to capture the Congress, and use its name and prestige for the propagation of our gospel.

The second reason is this: The Indian National Congress at the present day claims to be the most representative political organisation in our country. We controvert that point and maintain that the Congress has become the instrument of a clique and has ceased to be representative of Indian public opinion. If so, why not we prove the truth of our contention by effective action? Our opponents say that we are keeping out of the great National Institution because we are conscious that our principles and opinion cannot win the acceptance of that representative organisation. Why should we not try and disprove this statement?

The third argument in favour of Congress entry is this: There are a great many matters in Indian politics which can be tackled only on an All-India basis. Finance with the connected question of protection, tariff, customs and expenditure, military and otherwise, is perhaps the chief of them. There are again the questions of Railways, of Indians abroad, etc. Our leaders feel handicapped in reference to these matters by the fact that our organisation is only provincial. The need for an All-India organisation to deal with these matters is felt everywhere; and it is argued that the Indian National Congress being the most influential of the All-India organisations now in the field, it would be wise for us to join that body. "The voices of United India is scarcely heard now, there is no organ through which it can speak" is the argument of our pro-entry friends.

Of course, every one of these arguments is met by equally cogent counter-arguments by the opponents of Congress entry.

Gentlemen, whether we join the Congress or not, it is comparatively a minor matter. My one earnest desire is that we ought not to say or do anything that is, in the least, likely to impair our efficiency as a united and disciplined political party. Whatever the decision, let us arrive at it unanimously, and once adopted, let us carry it out faithfully.

### Conclusion.

The day of deception is gone: we see in the horizon the dawn of a brighter and clearer day than we ever saw before. The country has realised more clearly now "that our political future is not to be won merely by fine phrases or sentiments." The "placid, pathetic contentment of the masses," is getting slowly but steadily disturbed. There is a healthy stir in the political atmosphere everywhere. We have before us that "tide in our affairs which, taken at the flood, would lead on to fortune." Now is the time for us to close our ranks, and march united in a true spirit of sacrifice and service.



## Proceedings and Resolutions.

### 1. Congress Entry Resolution.

The Confederation reassembled on the 3rd JULY and proceeded with resolutions. The first resolution relating to the Congress entry ran thus :—

“(a) Whereas it is desirable that for the speedy attainment of Swaraj steps must be taken to bring about a greater unity amongst the various political parties in India, and whereas certain interested persons who have converted the Congress in Madras into a communal organisation to the serious detriment of national interests, have been misrepresenting both individually and in an organised manner the aims and objects of the non-Brahmin movement and whereas it is necessary that the non-Brahmin movement must have a wider field of activity in order to counteract such mischievous propaganda and correctly interpret and spread the ideals and objects of the movement, this Confederation give liberty to such of the members of the S. I. L. F. as are willing to join the Congress to do so. (b) This Confederation further resolves that the S. I. L. F. shall retain its individuality as a separate organisation. (c) This Confederation exhorts all non-Brahmins to join the S. I. L. F. and to work for the uplift of the masses.”

The resolution was moved by Mr. V. Chakkarai Chettiar. He said that after a considerable discussion, the Subjects Committee came to the conclusion in favour of Congress entry. Constitutional experts were in favour of that entry. The Congress was being used to the disadvantage of the non-Brahmins, for the power of the Congress so far as Madras was concerned lay in the hands of Brahmins. Non-Brahmins should therefore wrest that power from the hands of Brahmins and use the power to the advantage of non-Brahmins.

### AN AMENDMENT

Mr. J. N. Ramanathan moved the following amendment for the reason that the wording of the resolution did not satisfy some of the members present at the meeting :—

“Whereas it is highly necessary and desirable to bring about a greater unity amongst the non-Brahmins of all shades of opinion and whereas certain interested persons who have converted the Congress into a monopolistic organisation have been misrepresenting both individually and in an organised manner the aims and objects of the non-Brahmin movement and whereas it is necessary that such mischievous propaganda and misrepresentations should be counter-acted and whereas it is also necessary that steps should be taken to correctly interpret and spread the ideals and objects of the movement, this Confederation while exhorting all non-Brahmins to join the S. I. L. F. gives liberty to such of the members of the S. I. L. F. as are willing to join the Congress and other similar organisations to do so.

The object of the amendment was to retain the prestige and dignity of the non-Brahmins of the S. I. L. F. and to bring about harmony among all non-Brahmins whether they belonged to the Congress or the Justice Party.

Mr. T. V. Subramaniam Pillai in seconding the amendment said that the amendment, if carried, would not work detrimentally to the interests of non-Brahmins. This Confederation clearly proved that the non-Brahmins loved the movement intensely. The object of the amendment was to make up the differences existing between non-Brahmins of the Congress Party and those of the Justice Party. If the differences were removed by allowing non-Brahmins to be members of the Justice Party and of the Congress, all non-Brahmins could work for their benefit. The object of the present move was to wrest the power of the Congress Brahmins to use that power against the non-Brahmins from their hands. Let there be no doubt as to the success of the new move. If a large number of non-Brahmins joined the Congress by signing the creed their voice must prevail. If they failed in their attempt, they might convene another Confederation and decide to stay from the Congress for ever. There was not the least doubt that the Justice Party would suffer in any way. The non-Brahmin movement had done wonderful good to the

country which the Congress would never produce. The non-Brahmins of this Presidency should capture the Provincial Congress Committee first. The A. I. C. C. should yield to its demand otherwise it would not be an All-India organization. He asked the audience to give the leaders a trial which would not cost them anything.

Mr. Alagiriswami Naidu (Pattukettah) speaking next said that people of his stamp had sufficient experience of the Congress and had come out of it disgusted but others wanted to enter it, with a view to gain experience themselves. People of his stamp should continue to work for the benefit of the community of non-Brahmins. The Justice Party should continue its work undeterred by their defeat at the last election. Let those, who wished to join the Congress and attain Swaraj, do so.

Mr. V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, in supporting, said the non-Brahmins were the originators of the Congress. But now the power was in the hands of Brahmins. The present move was to get back that power. The Congress had among its members eminent patriots (non-Brahmins) working hard for self-government. Should the non-Brahmins of the Justice Party sit in deliberations with those eminent non-Brahmins and work for the attainment of Swaraj, the Congress could not get away from the idea of communal representation so long as various classes and communities existed in India. Without any hesitation they should all join the Congress.

Mr. J. N. Ramanathan moved to further amend his amendment by inserting after the words "all shades of opinion" in the amendment the words "whereas it is desirable that for the speedy attainment of Swaraj steps must be taken to bring about unity amongst the various political parties in India." The words "while exhorting" should appear in the end as "and exhorts".

This amendment was seconded by Mr. Subramania Pillai and accepted by the mover of the original resolution.

The amended amendment was then supported by Mr. Subramania Nainar (Sattur). He urged the necessity for joining the Congress so that the joint demand of the nation might be heard by their rulers.

Mr. Dandapani Pillai next supported the amended amendment.

The amended resolution was carried unanimously.

#### SPEECHES BY LEADERS.

Mr. R. K. Shanmugham Chetti, who was requested to speak, said that non-Brahmin movement was born in Coimbatore ten years ago. Now it had grown, strong. During the last few years he had come to know that politicians of other provinces had not a correct idea of the non-Brahmin movement and were under the impression that the Justice Party was based on class hatred. Truly it might be said that the Justice Party stood to remove class hatred. He was accused that he really belonged to the Justice Party in the garb of nationalism. Communal representation was accepted by the Congress. What was the Lucknow pact in respect of Mahomedans? At present there was no necessity for a separate electorate for non-Brahmins. Even the Mahomedans did not want separate electorate at present. The Congress stood for equal Justice to all and "The Hindu" received to-day expressed correctly the view of the Congress. Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar was not fit to be the Congress President as he was a class hater and he would bring forward a resolution before the A. I. C. C. to that effect. In conclusion, he said that the non-Brahmins should join the Congress in large numbers with a view to lend their support to the national demand for Swaraj. He added that he would gladly join the Justice Party.

Dr. P. Varadarajulu next addressed the meeting. He said that the Congress had stood between one set of non-Brahmins and another till now, and that they had all become one. If this union had been effected before the election, the non-Brahmins would have come out victorious. Swaraj should be their goal and at the same time they should try to uproot the power of Brahmins. The two should go together. Let not Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar or anybody think that the Justice Party would hesitate to reject their titles before joining the Congress. He then explained the conduct of Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar as being opposed to principles of the Congress and exhorted the audience to join hands and work for the uplift of the masses, the majority of whom are non-Brahmins. In future they should enter the Congress just as the Swarajists entered the Council and give up class hatred. He too ended his speech by saying that he would join the Justice Party.

Mr. T. V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar who next addressed the meeting said that non-Brahmins had been called class haters however hard they might work for the good of the country, without class hatred. In future he would call the Raja of Panagal as the leader of the non-Brahmins. Great credit was due to Mr. E. V. Ramaswami Naicker and others for yielding to this arrangement.

Mr. E. V. Ramaswami Naicker, next addressing the meeting, said that the non-Brahmins should work unitedly and should try to bring into their fold all non-Brahmins whether they be Independents or otherwise.

Mr. Surendranath Arya next addressed the meeting.

Mr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, who rose amidst cheers, said that there was some misapprehension that this new move might endanger the separate entity of the South Indian Liberal Federation. Now the unanimity with which the resolution had been passed showed that such an apprehension was unfounded and not contemplated at all. The Party now became more virile, and would march forward to greater glory and success. The appeal to non-Brahmins of all parties to join the movement had been fructified in a tangible form by the resolution being carried. The party welcomed those who joined the movement without the slightest reservation for the establishment of the just privileges of non-Brahmins. If the party felt that he should go and enter the Congress to carry out the object of the S. I. L. F. he would do so with their mandate.

## 2. Non-Acceptance of Office.

Dewan Bahadur O. Thanikachellam Chettiar moved the following resolution :

"In view of the fact that the Justice Party after having worked the system of diarchy for six years in this Province has found, as stated in the memoranda of its Ministers that it is a difficult system to work ; and in view also of the fact that it is impossible to carry on a diarchic administration, if any portion of the reserve half is fundamentally opposed to the principles and policy of the transferred half ; and in view further of the fact that it has been found possible under the diarchic system to install in office a benami ministry which has worked no following in the Council and which by its unscrupulous methods has brought the administration of local self-government into contempt ; this confederation while approving and ratifying the attitude taken up by the members of the Justice Party in the Legislative Council declares it as its considered opinion that the Justice Party should not accept the responsibility of office till Provincial autonomy is conceded to the Province".

This resolution was seconded by Mr. Pannirselvam and carried.

## 3. No Confidence In The Governor.

Mr. M. T. Subrahmanya Mudaliar next moved the following resolution :—

"Whereas by continuing in office, a Ministry, which depends for its very existence upon an unholy alliance with an apparent opposition and which, merely to support that opposition has by its unprincipled and unscrupulous acts, in reference particularly to the detriment of local self-government and by a gross misuse of the powers of nomination detrimental to the purity of the administration of local self-government, is bringing into contempt ; and whereas further by permitting a member of the Executive Council to abuse his position and authority to foster and strengthen the monopoly of public and responsible offices by a particular community which is already over represented and diverse similar acts ; His Excellency the Governor has alienated the sympathies of the masses of the vast Province, this confederation places on record its emphatic opinion that His Excellency the Governor is forfeiting his claim to the confidence of the people as a just and impartial administrator of the Province in his charge.

Mr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar in seconding the motion said that they should enter the protest against the manner in which the administration was carried so that those responsible for the administration might revise their ways. The resolution expressed want of confidence in the Governor who formed a Ministry from the Independents who had no party behind them and who suffered a series of defeats for three long months. The Governor ought to have asked the Ministers to resign and taken upon his shoulder the control of the transferred departments. Further, the

Governor, had made himself directly responsible for the maladministration of the Province, especially of local self-government. On the reserved side, the administration was not in the interest of the general taxpayer. The Tuticorin Harbour, Mettur and Pykhara schemes were instances. His Excellency had therefore forfeited the confidence of the public of this province in his administration. In the matter of Judicial administration and the constitution of the judiciary, things were done without the slightest regard to public opinion.

Mr. E. V. Ramaswami Naicker moved to amend the resolution so as to include the words "that the Governor should be recalled" and made a strong speech. But at the request of his friends he did not press the amendment.

The resolution was put to the confederation and carried unanimously.

#### 4. Other Resolutions

The following resolutions were also carried :—

"This confederation strongly condemns the action of the Government of India in rejecting the recommendations of the Textile Tariff Board and urges upon Government the imperative necessity of affording adequate protection to the Indian Mill Industry."

"Whereas grave apprehensions are entertained by the public regarding the propriety, financial and otherwise, of the schemes relating to Pykhara, Mettur and Tuticorin harbour and whereas further there is a general uneasiness that even in the actual execution of these schemes the interests of the general taxpayer are not adequately safeguarded, this confederation is of opinion that the Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State for India and the Government of India should immediately constitute an impartial committee to examine fully the schemes from all points of view and to advise the local Government thereon and that till then the working of the schemes should be kept in abeyance."

The Conference then adjourned for the day.

#### 5. Demand for Provincial Autonomy.

On the 4th JULY the following resolutions were adopted :—"This Conference resolves that full provincial autonomy be granted immediately to this province and further resolves that the Government of India be made responsible for the Legislative Assembly. In view of the fact that the majority of the labourers forms the non-Brahmin public, this Confederation is of opinion that a labour organ should, with ample funds, necessarily be started to ventilate their grievances.

"It regrets that Government did not give them any adequate representation in the Legislative Council, local bodies, etc., in spite of their remaining in a large majority.

"It requests Government to nominate them to places which fall vacant.

"It desires that labour candidates should be returned unopposed in elections and that a non-official Mediation Board should be established to settle disputes between labour and capital."

Resolutions to give up the taking of priests on ceremonial occasions from a third community, on self-respect and self-help, method of worshipping god, removal of untouchability, wearing of khaddai were also passed.

The confederation condemned the preponderance of Brahmins in Civil and Judicial and other departments, including the Secretariat and opined that Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar was not the proper person to represent India at the Geneva Conference. The Chairman made a few remarks congratulating the non-Brahmins assembled at the meeting on the great success of the Confederation. With the usual vote of thanks to the President, the volunteers, etc., the Confederation came to a close.

## The Bombay Non-Brahmin Conference.

The Special Bombay Non-Brahmin Conference opened at Bombay on the 27th AUGUST before a large gathering. Mr. B. K. Dalvi, the President of the Belgaum Municipality, was in the chair.

Mr. DALVI made out a vigorous plea against the proposal to enter the Congress. The policy of the Swarajists, he declared, was the policy of the Congress. The Congressmen wanted to destroy Dyarchy and restore Bureaucracy and to do away with communal representation whether in the legislative bodies or in the public services. He asked the Non-Brahmins that the present-day ideal of the Congress was in consonance with their ideals. They should not be enamoured of Congress-entry. Were they going to kill their own institution and join hands with the Congressmen, in order to destroy the Constitution under which they had achieved so much for the benefit of the agricultural and working classes?

Nothing, Mr. Dalvi continued, would be more unwise and suicidal than to think of entering the Congress, at the present juncture, when the Statutory Commission was imminent. Non-Brahmins should strive to obtain representation on the Commission and put forward their demands before it was appointed. There was no use creating breaches in Non-Brahmin ranks on points like Congress-entry at a time when unity was essential to secure a hearing at the hands of the Commission. Further, the conditions which necessitated the disqualification imposed on members of the Non-Brahmin Party against joining other organisations, had not in any way changed. He did not find anything attractive in the Congress, which, in the words of its prospective President, was one vast camp of warring communal factions, bent on destroying each other. Did the Non-Brahmins want to add one more warring camp to those already existing in it?

Turning to the Coimbatore resolutions, the Chairman thought that the Madras Non-Brahmins forgot that they formed a part and parcel of the All-India Non-Brahmin Party and that they should consult the other members of that party before taking action entailing grave and serious consequences. Looked at from any point of view, he could not recommend to the Bombay Non-Brahmins, the action of their Madras brethren, unless the former wished to be blind imitators.

Continuing, Mr. Dalvi said that the reasons given for the Madras Non-Brahmins' decision, were that dyarchy had failed and that the Governor had acted on the advice of some high officer in not offering the Ministerships to the Justice Party. It was difficult to understand, said Mr. Dalvi, why, when the knowledge of the failure of dyarchy had dawned on the Madras Non-Brahmins, they went to the polls as constitutionalists, saying they had been able to work dyarchy successfully and had many schemes on hand to carry through, if they were returned to power. The defective nature of dyarchy could not, therefore, be the real cause of the Coimbatore decision of the Justice Party.

As regards the ground that His Excellency did not offer ministerial posts to the Justice Party, all that he knew was that His Excellency had no other alternative but to ask the Independent Party to form a Ministry, which they could do as they had the indirect support of the Congress Party members. That was perfectly constitutional. Under the Constitution, His Excellency was bound to choose Ministers from the party which could run dyarchy; and Non-Brahmins, as constitutionalists, could not have any grudge against those who acted equally constitutionally.

### Resolutions.

On the 28th AUGUST there was a full attendance of delegates when the Conference reassembled, at 10 p.m., with Mr. Dalvi in the chair.

The Subjects Committee had just risen after a prolonged discussion of the main proposition before the Conference, Mr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar taking a prominent part in it and explaining the circumstances which necessitated the decision taken by the Madras Non-Brahmins. Mr. Mudaliar endeavoured also to counteract the lead given by the President against the proposal to enter the Congress; but the

Committee eventually rejected the proposal by 12 to 10 votes; and the principal resolution before the open Conference therefore took the following shape :—

“Taking into consideration the peculiar conditions of the Non-Brahmin party and the Indian National Congress in Bombay, the Conference is of opinion that it is not at all desirable for the Party to join the Indian National Congress nor is it advisable for the members of the party to join that body.”

In moving the resolution, Mr. D. W. Rawoot declared that the Congress was so disorganised that it would be worse than useless to form a part of it. By doing so, the Non-Brahmins would succeed in denying themselves the opportunities they had of serving the country through the Councils and the Cabinets.

M. K. S. Gupta in seconding, asked why the Non-Brahmins should enter a body whose ideals and methods were as vague as could be.

#### MR. VICHARE'S AMENDMENT

Mr. Vichare opposed the resolution, in a speech which was enthusiastically received. He declared that the opposition to entry into the Congress was engineered by interested leaders, who were afraid that their influence might be lost, as the result of such a step. He proposed an amendment, to the effect, that the Conference had no objection to individual members of the party being members of the Congress also.

The supporters of the amendment were given in equally enthusiastic hearing.

Mr. B. V. Jadhav, Ex-Minister, explained that what the amendment sought to convey was implied in the original resolution, which, he said, while prohibiting the party from joining the Congress left it open to individual members to do so, if they chose.

This interpretation opened an avenue for compromise between the section supporting the resolution and the amendments.

#### COMPROMISE RESOLUTION CARRIED

Accordingly, a short informal discussion was held, Mr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar participating, and as a result the following compromise resolution was agreed to :

“Taking into consideration the peculiar conditions of the Non-Brahmin party and the Indian National Congress in Bombay, this Conference is of opinion that it is not desirable for the party to join the Congress, nor is it advisable for the members of the party to join it; provided that any member who thinks he can further the party's cause better thereby, may do so.”

The resolution was put and carried with acclamation.

The second resolution accepted Mr. B. V. Jadhav as the Leader, and Rao Bahadur Kambli as the Deputy Leader of the Non-Brahmin Party in Bombay; while a third suggested measures for the strengthening of the party organisation.

After adopting these resolutions, the conference dispersed.

## The Indian Christian Conference.

The fourteenth Session of the All India Christian Conference met at Allahabad on the 30th DECEMBER 1927. The President Mr. B. L. Rallia Ram of Lahore, in the course of his address said :—

Chairman of the Reception Committee and brother delegates,—It is hardly necessary for me to reiterate what has been repeatedly said in previous years that we, as an Indian Christian community, share all the high and noble ideals and aspirations that India's sons and daughters have for their motherland. In no way do we lag behind in our loyalty and patriotism to our country and in no way do we desire to keep ourselves aloof from the main currents of our national life and its

struggle to attain all that is high and best, and we share equally with all our countrymen the glory of our heritage and their hopes and longings for the present and the future. If there are still some of our countrymen who consider that we do not regard ourselves as Indians, or that we are not patriotic they simply ignore our past and present history. In the list of illustrious gentlemen who have presided over the deliberation of this gathering during the past 12 years you will hardly meet a name which is not of Indian origin.

#### MISS MAYO'S ATTACK

Ordinarily no useful purpose would be served by referring to Miss Katherine Mayo's book 'Mother India' as many voices have been raised from both the press and the platform against some of the insinuations contained in this publication. It has been contended and that also by at least one person of importance that the publication of this book is a part of the missionary propaganda. It therefore becomes necessary to make some reference to this unpleasant subject, specially as it teaches us a few other lessons.

The accusation that this book has been written at the instigation of Christian missionary interests is baseless and unfounded. The National Christian Council, as representing all the important churches and missions in this country has authoritatively denied this charge and has in clear terms disapproved and condemned the book.

The accusation is a warning to those of our missionary friends who are still in the habit of laying emphasis on and exaggerating some of the dark and evil aspects of Indian life for the purpose of their propaganda in the 'homeland.' There was a time when this was common occurrence, but we have every reason to believe that there has been more or less a complete change of heart in this matter and a great majority of our missionary friends have changed their angle of vision entirely so that there is now more and more appreciation on their part of the beautiful and worthy elements in Indian culture and life. The Indian Christians at any rate do not stand for such propaganda which is calculated to bring India into contempt, and have on many occasions openly condemned it. On the whole this attitude has been supported by our missionary friends, though there are still cases where dubious methods are utilised, but the sooner such methods are given up the better for all concerned.

The greatest defect of this book lies in the argument whereby it is sought to make political deductions from social conditions and social evils. If the book had been written purely with a view to draw attention to some of the glaring evils of social life in India, there would have been no need of drawing conclusion for political purposes, neither would there have been any necessity for indulging in such grossly exaggerated generalisations and mis-statements as the book contains. The basic conception of the book is wrong.

#### THE COMMUNAL PROBLEM

An important question which is still pending solution and has a vital bearing on our future is that of inter-communal relationships. Nothing has so much shattered our faith in our future and dimmed our hopes as the unabated continuance of mutual distrust between the two largest communities. Though the third community in India in numbers, we are comparatively a minor and a small factor. It would be presumptuous on our part to make bold suggestions to the older communities. We have watched with the keenest disappointment the failure of all Unity Conferences and of all attempts at peace and the settlement of differences. If this problem is incapable of solution, then it may be humbly submitted that our demands for self-government and Swaraj are a mere dream and chimera. There is a tendency in some quarters to lay the entire blame on the Government. The Government, like all other human institution, is open to all the temptations and foibles to which the human mind is prone. It will therefore not be surprising if certain of its officials take advantage of this weakness in our national life, but I fail to understand why we should worry or bother about the Government while the matter primarily concerns ourselves. It behoves us first of all to search our own minds and hearts, before we absolve ourselves of our duty in this connection and before we place the responsibility of blame on other shoulders. It would appear from the abortive Unity Conference at Simla, that there was con-

siderable difference of opinion as to the causes of conflict between the two great communities. There are some who maintain that the causes are mainly political, while others hold that they are chiefly to be found in the domain of religion, while still others relegate them to the economic sphere. This only shows that they are so complex and intricate, that it is difficult to make a simple authoritative analysis. It might be of real advantage, if a study of the problem could be made by a group of persons well versed in the art of scientific research in problems whose ramifications are found in as varied spheres as religion, economics and politics. The system of dyarchy and the formula for responsible self-government were evolved by a method of group study undertaken by a larger number of persons interested in the problem under expert guidance. If a similar study could be undertaken of the communal problem it would undoubtedly be very valuable. If groups for the study of this momentous problem could be organised throughout the country under the machinery provided for sifting of the materials and for re-discussions of the issues that emerge, it would then be possible unless the malady is incurable, which I for one refuse to believe, to submit the conclusions to competent doctors for their diagnosis and proposals for remedial measures.

#### THE SIMON COMMISSION.

Now I come to another important matter that must receive your best thought at this Conference. What is to be our attitude towards the forthcoming "Simon Commission on the Reforms." Have we anything to place before it, or do we at all desire to appear before it? The most important issue to be raised is that of India's constitutional advance towards the goal of complete responsible government on Dominion lines. It is an issue which I feel myself incompetent to discuss at great length. It might well be left to our National leaders of the various schools of thought to discuss between themselves, to arrive at a common mind and then to place it before the Commission on behalf of the United Nation, if such a contingency is within the range of practical politics. But we may well turn our attention to that aspect of the matter which concerns us more closely in this Conference, namely immediate future constitution of India.

Before I go any further the question of our attitude towards the proposal of boycotting the Commission may be raised. Like all our countrymen we are disappointed by and resent the non-inclusion of Indians in the proposed Commission. We maintain equally with them that the theory underlying the decision is basically wrong. The object of the proposed boycott is not quite clear. Is it a method of protest against what is regarded as a wrong done to India, or is it a political weapon to be used for securing political progress? There needs to be clearer thinking on this issue. It needs to be remembered that Indian opinion has not altogether been eliminated, since provision has been made for it to have its voice heard at more than one stage of the enquiry. Let us hope that a very great deal of serious and even heart-searching consideration will be given to the subject before any leap is taken. Mere resentment at a certain action, however deep and strong it may be, cannot be sufficient justification for adopting extreme measures specially if they are of a negative nature.

#### COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION

We have repeatedly declared that we are against communal representation, at least through separate electorates. Personally I belong to that school of thought which regards communal representation in any form as vicious and harmful to the best interest of the nation. There are, however, a majority of our co-religionists who consider that the time has not yet come for the complete abolition of communal interests in our civic bodies. As a community we are now agreed that at any rate we desire representation through joint electorates. For the last three years the All-India Conference of Indian Christians has announced this to be our deliberate policy. The United Provinces Provincial Indian Christian Association, which was in favour of separate electorates last year, has this year veered round and accepted the principle of joint electorates. Last year the All-India Conference met at Madras, where our community has 5 seats by separate electorates. Even there the majority was in favour of representation through joint electorates. It is clear, therefore, that we are united, or at least have a considerable majority in favour of representation through



joint electorates. It is clear therefore, that we are united, or at least have a considerable majority in favour of asking for the reservation of seats in a system of joint electorates.

#### THE SYSTEM OF NOMINATIONS.

There is always a stigma attached to the nominated seats. Apart from this, in making nominations the eyes of the Government are always on the balance of the voting power in the Councils and therefore, in selecting their men for nomination, political considerations do come in which are not healthy from the point of view of a community which can for all practical purposes only be represented through that channel. It is an open secret that, in certain cases when making nominations, the heads of the principal governments consult the would-be ministers who naturally desire to consolidate their position in the councils by increasing the number of their own supporters. The nominated members thus become the nominees of the Government rather than the representatives of the community which they are supposed to represent. Only a person who is independent of all outside influences can be a worthy representative of our community. He should not always feel it his duty to go to the Government Lobby, nor should he feel shy of it, because the popular cry outside the legislatures demands otherwise. We do not want men of extreme views on either side. An Indian Christian must in every case follow the dictates of his conscience and should weigh and value every issue primarily from the moral point of view. Only then will there be any justification for our representation. Only then will we have a real part to play in moulding the future destinies of our country.

#### Resolutions Passed.

Resolutions were passed supporting temperance and welcoming the formation of the Prohibition League and urging that steps be taken to encourage young men to qualify for commercial and technical and agricultural careers, and urging the Government to recruit Indian Christians for the regular Indian Army.

On the next day, the 31st DECEMBER, a number of resolutions were passed by the Conference. Among them was a resolution condemning Miss Mayo's book ; but the Conference was of opinion that it should constitute a call to service on the part of Indians.

The Conference deplored the unhappy state of communal tension and reiterated its belief in joint electorates.

Dealing with the Statutory Commission, the Conference condemned the non-inclusion of Indians ; but urged the country to carefully consider whether the best interests of the nation were not likely to be seriously prejudiced by following a policy of boycott. It pleaded for higher and more adequate status for the legislative committee and urged the national leaders to draw up a constructive and practicable constitution and submit it to the Commission.

### The All India Khilafat Conference.

The All-India Khilafat Conference assembled on the 25th DECEMBER in the forenoon in the Congress pavilion Madras, Moulvi Md. Shafi presiding. Among those present were the Ali Brothers, Mr. Yakub Hassan, Dr. Abdur Rahman and Moulvi Abdul Bari, M.L.C.

Dr. Kitchlew had sent a telegram expressing inability to attend on account of his presence being required at Calcutta, but urging the Conference to boycott the Simon Commission and to frame a national constitution. Dr. Syed Mahmud and other Moslem leaders had also sent messages of sympathy.

Moulvi Murtuza, M.L. A., then delivered his welcome address, in the course of which he pleaded for boycott of the Simon Commission, which he characterised as a wanton affront to India and Indian Moslem public opinion and also emphasised

the need for a national constitution. He also pleaded for Hindu-Moslem unity and the Calcutta proposals for Hindu-Musalman settlement.

Moulvi Md. Shafi, M.L.A., who was then formally elected to the Chair amidst cries of "Alla-ho-Akbar," delivered his Urdu speech pleading for co-operation of his co-religionists in boycotting the Royal Commission on the Reforms. The President was against the acceptance of Legislative Committees, which he remarked, was calculated to demoralise Indian life and lower its tone besides vitally affecting their best and national interests.

Moulvi Shafi prefaced his address with a plea for keeping the Khilafat Committees alive. He opined that Mahomedans would be committing a folly if they should say that unless a settlement was arrived at in regard to their social and political rights, they should desist from boycott of the Simon Commission. Certainly this was no time to talk of settlements.

He then welcomed the visit of the King of Afghanistan and supported His Majesty's suggestion of an Asiatic League.

The conference then adjourned to reassemble in the night when Moulvi Shafi moved from the chair a resolution of condolence at the death of Zaglul Pasha, whose demise, the motion added, was a great loss to the dependent Eastern nations.

Moulvi Shaukat Ali in moving the next resolution thanking the King of Afghanistan for receiving an address from the Khilafat Committee declared that His Majesty was going to Europe to gain knowledge and experience with a view to start an Asiatic League and wished him success.

On a motion of Moulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib M.L.A. the Conference passed a resolution approving the Delhi proposals put forth by the Muslim Party of India and approved of by the A. I. C. C. at Bombay and also approving of the Calcutta unity proposals in the direction of establishing Hindu-Muslim Unity.

Mr. Shuaib Quraishi in supporting the resolution explained the scope of the Calcutta unity proposals. He stated that dominance of the British over India is solely due to the discord that is prevailing between the two great communities of India. He continued that the moment the two communities unite and recognise and respect each other's rights and privileges that moment India wins Swaraj. The Conference then dissolved.

## The Calcutta Khilafat Conference.

Presiding over the Khilafat Conference at Town Hall, Calcutta on the 21st AUGUST, Maulana Mahomed Ali sounded a note of warning on the question of Music before Mosques.

The Maulana said that he was prepared, in the common interest of the country and national development, even to concede this to the Hindus; for he knew that when the Moslem really concentrated on his prayers, no music and no beating of drums could disturb him. But, he could not tolerate any insult to the Holy Prophet. He strongly criticised the speech of Dr. Moonji, who had stated that the sword of the Mahomedans had turned the Hindu countries into Mahomedan countries. It was the spirit of Islam, he emphasised, that conquered India, Afghanistan, Baluchistan and Persia. Islam spread on account of the truth in it.

The Moulana asserted that it was a foolish idea for the Hindus to think of driving the Mahomedans out; and concluded that there was only one ideal for the Moslems in India. That was mutual understanding of each other, a spirit of mutual toleration.

Maulana Mahomed Ali explained in what relationship the Mussalmans stood to their Prophet, and discussed the draft of the new law that he had prepared and sent to the Viceroy, trusting that the Government of India would take steps to have it enacted during the current session of the Assembly. As for himself, he said, he

would not seek redress from any court of law. For the sake of freeing India from thralldom, he would put up with many things from the Hindu. But if the cup of his patience overflowed and if he found Rajpal publishing again anything so vile as his pamphlet "Rangila Rasul," he would go and throttle him or lose his own life in the attempt. This was not as the "Mahratta" said, due to any homicidal wave. Why did Lord Krishna call upon Arjun to fight in Kurukshetra? Did he want Arjun to be drowned by a homicidal wave? If Krishna could call upon Arjun to fight his Kuru cousins, surely it would not be a homicidal wave that would compel him to take the life of a Hindu brother who wantonly reviled the Prophet. Dr. Moonje, in spite of his love of the cult of bomb and pistol and of lathi, would take shelter under the axiom "Ahimsa Paramodharma." Yet, the "Mahratta" thought that he (the speaker) had been carried away by a homicidal wave, when he said that he would throttle Rajpal if he repeated his offence.

Concluding, the Maulana said that he would ask Moslems not to resort to violence. If however they refused to follow his lead and were determined to fight, it was foolish to issue a declaration of war every day without making any preparations for defence. The true defence of Mussalmans consisted in organising themselves on the lines of Islam, and by becoming independent of others, so far, at least, as food and clothing were concerned. He did not preach boycott of Hindus; but the poverty of Mussalmans must be removed. And if the Muslims opened grain and cloth shops, many a poor man of their community would be able to earn enough to feed himself and his family, instead of becoming a vagrant or a Goonda or even selling himself to Shuddhi missionaries. He asked the young men to form themselves into a body of volunteers to carry out this programme, and to help the poor and needy in times of distress. This was the true preparation for war; but, instead of preparing themselves on these lines, Mussalmans accepted the leadership of those who issued declarations of war every day which cost them nothing, but cost the community only too much.

### Resolutions

The Conference passed a resolution expressing dissatisfaction at the judgment delivered in the "Rangila Rasul" case and recommended that the law be enacted to make punishable publication of any slanders against Prophets and Saints.

In the opinion of the Conference the bill drafted by Maulana Mohamed Ali was necessary and adequate for the purpose and that the Government should take steps to enact it and bring it into force as a law of the land as soon as possible.

The Conference passed another resolution to the effect that the Conference regretfully invited the attention of the Hindu community as their fellow countrymen to the new situation that had manifested itself during the last five years, in particular during the period commencing from the regrettable incidents that took place in Calcutta and latest, at Betiah, where murder and rapine had been the order of the day. These went to prove that a large section of their fellow countrymen were day and night planning and preparing for organised action in attacking Moslems whenever opportunity presented itself in order to cow them down. The Conference considered it to be its duty to give warning to their fellow countrymen that the only result of such activities would, throughout India, lead the two communities to stand face to face prepared for a civil war.

In the opinion of the Conference the responsibility for such a disastrous fratricidal struggle would be their fellow countrymen's and the losses that the mother country would sustain would prove fatal to the nation. At the same time the conference considered it to be its duty to warn the Mahomedans against being too readily provoked since breach of the peace, and disorder that followed, came in the way of their real spiritual and temporal progress. On the other hand they should concentrate their attention on reforming their religious, economic and educational conditions.

The Conference was also of the opinion that the Government too was not doing all they should to put a stop to the communal riots and the Conference warned the Government that they would have to bear the consequence of their present inaction.

## The All India Hindu Mahasabha

The special session of the All India Hindu Maha Sabha met at the Congress Pandal Madras, On the 29th DECEMBER at 2. p. m. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya presiding.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar in proposing Pandit Malaviya to the presidential chair said that Pandit Malaviya had made the Hindu Sabha movement his own. The Sabha was a power in Northern India. Panditji is the leader of the Sanatana Hinduism. He, the speaker, considered that the accession of the Panditji to the presidentship of this session was the removal of untouchability from this province. The removal of untouchability could not be done by legislation or by the Congress. The Hindu Sabha alone could do it. The Panditji had helped a good deal in the National Congress to find a solution for the Hindu-Moslem problem. The Sabha was not antagonistic to Mahomedan interest. No one was better fitted to occupy the presidential chair than Panditji. He, the speaker, was sorry to announce the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan who had been ill for some time past. The A. I. C. C. passed a resolution of condolence this morning. A similar resolution would, he said, be passed here also. Hakim Ajmal Khan had laboured hard to bring about the Hindu-Moslem unity.

The motion was seconded by Mr. C. V. Venkatramana Iyengar, supported by Kumar Gangananda Sinha and carried with acclamation.

Pandit MALAVIYA then addressed the Conference first in Hindi and then in English. He explained the objects of the Sabha and appealed to all sections of the Hindus to be united.

### PANDIT MALAVIYA'S ADDRESS

Ladies and gentlemen, I am very deeply grateful to you for having elected me to preside over this special session of the Hindu Mahasabha. I take this opportunity to put before you some of the ideals which the Hindu Mahasabha has for its existence and to ask to cooperate in carrying out these ideals. I wish you to remember that this Hindu Mahasabha was never brought into existence as a communal organisation to fight against any community. It is national to the core. Nationalism is as much the creed of the Hindu Mahasabha as Hinduism itself. The main objects of the Sabha are (a) to promote greater union and solidarity among all the section of the Hindu community and to unify them closely as parts of one organic whole and (b) to promote good feelings between the Hindus and other communities in India and to act in a friendly way with them with a view to the attainment of a united self-governing Indian nation. You will see from these objects that they are not anti-national but entirely consistent with the national aim. Ever since its inception up to date, not a single resolution has been passed by this Sabha which any reasonable man who has any sense of nationalism in him can take exception to. India is the home of the various communities, and Hinduism teaches you to pray for the prosperity and well-being of all the communities, not of one particular community alone. You should act in such a manner as to create harmony between the various communities which will lead the country to a position of power and prosperity. The Hindu Mahasabha does not ask you to exercise your political rights but it tells you what you should do in matters of a socio-religious character. The Hindus are asked to look after the education of their children under the Hindu faith just as Christians are looking after the education of their children under the Christian faith and the Mahomedans under the Muslim faith. The Hindus are also asked to look after their own classes of worship in temples. Are not Christian missionaries in India labouring in different fields for the benefit of the people of this country although they are foreigners. The Mussalman preacher (Mullah) considers it his duty to make the principles of his religion known not only to Muslims but also to Non-Muslims so that, they may, if convinced, adopt the Muslim faith. The Christian missionary does the same thing. You do not expect the Mahomedan Mullah or the Christian missionary to look after the Hindu religion. Therefore the Hindus should have their own organisation to look after their socio-religious matters. This is what the great Sri Sankaracharya and Sri Ramanujacharya did. Since the advent

of the British rule, owing to the glamour of British civilisation, our people and children know more of the Bible and the sermons preached by the Christian missionaries than their own religion, their own Sastras, and Vedas and commentaries. There should be an organisation like the Hindu Mahasabha to do these things. Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar just now told you that the necessity for such an organisation does not exist in this presidency. I regret to say that I widely differ from my esteemed friend. On the other hand, it is more needed in this presidency than in any other part of the country. (Cheers.) The teachings of Sri Sankaracharya, Ramajacharya and Madvacharya can be popularised in this presidency as you have a good number of learned men in Sanskrit. Just as Christians have institutions to protect orphans and widows, you should also have similar institutions. In Christian schools, Bible classes are compulsory whereas in a Hindu school, religious classes are not compulsory. Hinduism always expects you to adopt an attitude of justice and truth. Do not waste your time in unnecessary discussion over the question as to whether your descent is Aryan or Dravidian. The Brahmin-Non-Brahmin question is, I understand, very keen in this presidency. So far as I know, the division, Brahmin-Non-Brahmin, does not find any place in the Sastras. Our daily national prayer is that all men to whatever community they may belong should flourish on this earth. I appeal to you, Brahmins and Non-Brahmins, to desist from this unsastric attitude and re-establish brotherly feeling towards one another. If you cannot give up this quarrel, you can never attain freedom and liberty. Your communal controversy has resulted in making you look like a flock of sheep without a shepherd.

Coming to the question of untouchables I am aware that Madras has made great progress in recent years in this respect, but there yet remains more to be achieved especially in the matter of the entry of the so-called untouchables into temples for worship. Every man has got a right to worship God. I appeal to you to remove this disability and the Mahasabha has this question of the removal of untouchability as one of its objects. In Benares, untouchables freely enter the temple of Viswanath and worship God. In the Rama mandir at Ayodhya, the Mahant has not the least objection to the untouchables entering the Mandir. Bagavad-Gita says that the moment a man utters the name of God, he becomes pure. I can multiply instances, where untouchables freely enter places of worship along with higher classes. The mere fact that a man is an untouchable does not disentitle him to enter the temple and worship God, if he is pure in mind. God accepts his prayer and he should therefore be allowed to worship God in temples. God welcomes the man who is morally pure more than the man who is physically pure.

## RESOLUTIONS

### I. HAKIM AJMAL KHAN'S DEATH

The condolence resolution touching the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan was put from the chair and carried :—"The Hindu Sabha places on record its profound sense of loss which the country has sustained in the sad and sudden death of Hakim Ajmal Khan whose services to the country in the field of medicine and politics are too well known to require a mention and offers its deep sympathy to his son Hakim Mahomed Jamial Khan and other members of his family".

### 2. BOYCOTT OF THE SIMON COMMISSION

The following resolution regarding the boycott of the Simon Commission was moved by Mr. C. Vijiarghavachariar, duly seconded and supported and carried.

"The Hindu Maha Sabha in this special session assembled records in consonance with the strong general feeling of the country its emphatic condemnation of Government in the matter of appointment of the Statutory Commission in violation of the fundamental rights of self-determination and self-government of the people of this country and in defiance of their demands in this connection and is of opinion that this action of the Government is a violation of the promises and pledges made from time to time especially during the great war in appreciation of the great service and immense sacrifices made by this country in the hour of the peril of the Empire and as such it is nothing short of studied insult to the nation. The Hindu Maha Sabha,

therefore, in association with the Indian National Congress and other bodies calls upon the people to boycott the Commission at every stage and at every manner".

The following resolutions were then adopted by the Sabha after which the special session came to a close.

### 3. SWARAJ CONSTITUTION

"The Hindu Mahasabha is of opinion that a suitable draft constitution for the self-government of India would be framed in consultation with the Congress and other important bodies in accordance with the following basic principles" :—

"1. Responsible Government of the unitary type like that of Great Britain with provincial and local governments deriving the power from the central government."

"2. The Sovereign Indian States and the Central Government of India forming a Federal Union."

"3. Universal and uniform franchise on non-communal and national basis with joint electorate under laws and regulations prescribing qualifications based on education, property etc. etc."

### 4. THANKS TO H. M. THE KING OF AFGHANISTAN

"That the Hindu Mahasabha tenders its respectful and profound thanks to his Majesty King Amanulla of Afghanistan for the very kindly regard shown by him to Hindu religious feelings in the matter of respect for the cow and for the advice which he was pleased to give to the Mussalmans of Hindustan to respect Hindu sentiments in this matter".

### 5. COW PROTECTION

"That having regard to the fact that :—(a) from time immemorial Hindus have held the cow in great reverence and that the slaughter of the cow deeply wounds their religious feelings and that their religion enjoins upon them the duty of protecting a cow at all costs ; (b) that Islam does not enjoin as a duty upon its followers to offer a cow as a sacrifice. (c) that out of regard for Hindu feelings several Muslim rulers of India prohibited cow-slaughter in India ; (d) that a departure from this practice has been a source of frequent deplorable quarrels and riots in India in which Mussalmans' and Hindus' lives have been lost, and with a view to remove this great and long lasting cause of dissension between the two communities, the Hindu Mahasabha makes an earnest appeal to all Indian Mussalmans to stop cow slaughter either for the purpose of sacrifice or food and thereby promote lasting goodwill and national harmony between the two great communities".

### 6. MUSIC BEFORE MOSQUES

"The Hindu Mahasabha calls upon its Working Committee to ascertain from the accredited leaders of the Muslim community what reasonable rules they desire the Hindus to observe in the matter of playing of music before mosques and to use its utmost endeavour to persuade the Hindus in all parts of the country to meet their wishes".

## The Andhra Provincial Conference

The Andhra Provincial Conference commenced its session at Anantapur under the presidency of Mr. D. Narayana Razu on the 12th NOVEMBER 1927. After Mr. C. Obreddi has delivered his welcome address, the President delivered his interesting address in Telugu. The following is the text :—

I thank you very much for the kind and generous feelings with which you chose me as the President of this Conference.

Last year, when we met at Ellore, it was our lot to bemoan the loss of Maddi Radhakrishnayya. To-day we have to recall, with grief, the untimely loss of a cultured soul, dedicated to a life of service and sacrifice, the sad bereavement of Sri-

mathi Maganti Annapoornadevi. The loss to Andhra land cannot be easily estimated.

The year 1921 witnessed the high pitch of our political hopes with the advent of Mahatma Gandhi's leadership. Our Andhradesa along with the sister provinces was full of non-co-operation zeal. We started upon the no-tax campaign too. Even to-day Andhras are ahead in the political struggle of the country. The resolutions of the Andhra Provincial Conference of last year, at Ellore, would only bear witness to this forward nature of the Andhras.

We also resolved that civil disobedience is the only resort left open for the nation and that the Indian National Congress should be requested to launch out a programme of civil disobedience. But somehow, the Gauhati Congress could not find its way to fall in with our view. It not only failed to accept our resolutions but, in the name of public interest, supported Council entry

#### COUNCIL PROGRAMME

The conditions in the country have changed since the Gauhati Congress. The self-contradictory nature of the Gauhati resolution blasted the hopes of the nation. It had disheartened the people. At the time of the first election to the reformed councils, as staunch lovers of freedom, we eschewed the Councils. We worked heart and soul amidst our people.

When the Congress boycotted the Councils, job hunters, self-seeking sycophants got easy entry into the Councils. They became the prop to the Government in fettering the true patriotic sons of our motherland. They became one with the bureaucracy. The noble service and self-sacrifice of all the mighty patriots under Mahatma's leadership sank into the dust.

If the Justice, Liberal and Independent and other parties had not joined hands with the Government, discrediting the Congress resolutions, we would even as early as 1921, have reached the goal of our political aspirations. Desabandhu Das, too, then pointed out that if the loyalists were not ousted out of the Councils, the impediments to the attainment of Swaraj would still be there.

But it should be said to the credit of our Desabandhu, that by his self-sacrificing spirit, and organising capacity he brought about the paralysis of the legislatures, in Bengal and Central provinces. Diarchy licked the dust. Even Lord Birkenhead, lying aside the cloak of official reticence and prestige, tried to come to terms with Das. But, what of all that?

The leader was lost and the following became divided.

In 1925, the Cawnpore Congress took the responsibility to lead the nation and flood the Councils with Swarajists. We, as Congressmen, bowed down before the Congress mandate. Congressmen could secure a majority in no Legislative Council. Even then, the Swarajists, in the Bengal Council, put down the diarchy. As for our Madras Council, we are ashamed to own our failure to maintain our prestige.

"Work out the reforms" some say. But Reforms give no scope of freedom and are inadequate. How are we to swim in a dish of water?

Council-entry can be made use of only to bring out the evil nature of this Government. It can be made use of, to check anti-nationalistic hangers on—of the Government—gaining ground in the Councils. It can even be made use of to paralyse the power of the Government. The innate force of the people must come out if victory is to be gained in the fight for freedom. It is to clear the way for the free play and evolution of the national forces that we should make use of this Council entry. If we can focus the public opinion as in the year 1921 it is proper that we should boycott the councils in toto. Failing that let us adopt the policy of vacating the council seats, retaining our claims therefor at the same time. But we should not direct the Congress to the condition obtaining in 1919.

#### THE ROYAL COMMISSION

It is a pity our love of freedom, instead of striding ahead, is declining. We still look up to the Government. Should we not with one voice proclaim that our future is in our own hands? It is an illusion and a dream that the British would of their own accord, grant our freedom. They will not apply the principle of self-determination to the Indian nation. Whatever be the personnel of the Commission

—be they all Indians, be they all Englishmen, be they all good men or bad,—they are not the men to decide the fitness or unfitness of India for Swaraj.

A Congress, that rejected the Reform Act as unsatisfactory, cannot welcome the Royal Commission empanelled as per the provisions of the said Act. Who has empowered the Britishers to test our fitness for Swaraj? If they are the self-appointed trustees of this land they may say so. But India will not accept them.

As Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman put it "Good Government is no substitute for self-government." Even supposing that we submit ourselves to these periodical examination of the British, do you ever hope, to be pronounced by them as fit for self-government?

How can we learn swimming without getting into water? We should not give any evidence before the Commission. It would be an open admission of our unfitness to judge and rule.

#### MISS MAYO'S BOOK

We are on the one hand proclaimed, all over the world, as a barbarous nation, unfit for Swaraj and on the other hand Commissions are deputed to test our fitness. The book of Miss Mayo is a tissue of lies. Our social and political life is disfigured and presented to the world in a distorted manner. It is stated that she was paid and remunerated for this slander, and that 5,000 books were freely distributed among the members of Parliament. In the face of these events, is it possible to believe that the Royal Commission would judge things with an unbiassed and generous view? Never. Never for all the world! All the interviews of the Viceroy and local satraps are only several scenes of this drama. Is it not then our duty to boycott this Commission. Just as the Milner Commission was boycotted by Egypt so shall India teach this Commission a moral lesson.

#### DEMAND FOR UNITY

The Hindu-Muslim quarrels are a blot on the nation. If both extremists and Moderates join hands and boycott the Commission, it is understood that the Government intends to pat on the shoulders of Communalists and take them into their fold. There is nothing surprising in this. Just as the communities came to a harmonious understanding in the matter of electoral representation, so also they shall even in the matter of cow slaughter and music before the mosque come to a cordial terms. The Calcutta resolutions on unity have paved the way for this and we hope the meeting of leaders like Mahomedali Jinnah, Malaviya, on a common platform will cement the two communities into closer bond and union.

#### THE NON-BRAHMIN PARTY

Justice party should give up its old outlook. Let them too give up the desire for Ministerial jobs and work for the nation by adopting the Congress programme. This will be a blessing to the country. At a time when even Mahomedans are being persuaded to give up their claims for separate electorate it is not proper that Non-Brahmins should ask for special representation.

Capacity must be the sole test in making appointments. It is only then that the Government will be sound and efficient. It would be welcome if even the whitemen forego their claims of preference.

To solve this problem there are only two alternatives. Even if those industrial and technical studies are developed by the Government there is not enough encouragement given for private enterprise under the present government. So, full responsible government alone can solve this. The people's slave mentality to seek appointments in Government service can be ended by the establishment of national schools.

There seems to be no ray of hope as to the enactment of total prohibition of drink. What can the Ministers, who have no hold on finances, do. It is ridiculous to believe in the promise of total prohibition, in the course of 20 years. Congress should again take up the work of self-purification by establishing labour unions.

A Cabinet Minister said :—"We have not conquered India for the benefit of Indians. We hold it as the finest outlet for British goods in general and for Lancashire cotton goods in particular." Let every Indian remember this and remember that Khaddar is the solution for the salvation of our country.



### Resolutions.

The first resolution that was moved and passed ran as follows :—

"This Conference places on record its deep sense of sorrow and loss at the untimely demise of Srimati Annapuradevi (who was through all her life) a standing monument of unparalleled sacrifice and sincere service ; and expresses heartfelt sympathy with all her relations in their bereavement."

#### 1.—BOYCOTT OF STATUTORY COMMISSION

The second resolution related to the boycott of the Statutory Commission and ran as follows :—

"Whereas this Conference believes in the principle of self-determination for the speedy attainment of Swaraj and whereas the appointment of the Reforms Commission is a negation of the above principle, this Conference urges upon all political parties, the boycott of the said Commission, that is to visit India in a short time."

#### 2.—NEILL STATUE SATYAGRAHA

Then the resolution, supporting the Neill Statue Satyagraha, was moved.

Mr. V. Rama Rao traced the history of the Neill Statue Satyagraha, in brief, as he moved the resolution, and detailed the various cruelties committed by General Neill in his time. He said that though the statue was found in Madras and the Satyagraha in this connection was started by his Tamilian brethren, he considered it to be a question of All-India moment. He showed how the statue is a standing insult and humiliation to Indian sentiment and self-respect.

He said that the importance of the Neill Statue Satyagraha Movement need not be emphasised on minds that had decided upon the boycott of the Royal Commission. He commended to young men the noble example of the old lady, B Lakshminarayana Garu, aged 75 years, who was preparing to offer Satyagraha before the Neill Statue in Madras, in a short time.

He concluded by hoping that people who could not offer Satyagraha themselves would at least view the movement with the sympathy that it deserved at their hands.

Mr. Ramachandruni Venkatappayya, a gentleman who was about to offer Satyagraha along with Lakshminarasamma Garu, then seconded the motion. He pointed out how this Satyagraha was not the outcome of any racial hatred. He said that it was mainly a question of humanity versus inhumanity, in short. It was, in other words, he said, a question of foreign domination versus national self-respect and self-assertion.

Mr. C. Obi Reedi said, in the course of his speech, that he was one of those that voted for the removal of the statue, when the subject came up for discussion before the Legislative Council. He promised to do the same should it come up again before the House. He said that he had sincere doubts of his own regarding the usefulness of the present campaign. He felt sorry that several patriotic sons of India were wasting their energies upon this question. He said that there were many other matters that deserved much better attention than this one. He said that the statue could be removed with one stroke of the pen, when they attained Swaraj.

Mr. B. Sambamurti observed in the course of his speech that everyone that felt the statue to be an insult and challenge to the self-respect of the nation, should join the movement. He said that he did not like to give a republican air to the movement by himself taking part in it. So, he kept aloof from the movement till now. He felt there was not sufficient enthusiasm on this question at Madras. He also said that Andhradesa, if she wanted to take up the lead, must fill Madras with volunteers first and then embark upon the programme. He said that Mahatma Gandhi himself might choose to lead the movement if the statue should not be removed from there by the time the National Congress meets at Madras.

Mr. T. Prakasam also said that the Neill Statue affair was not a thing to be lightly dismissed. He said that the meaning underlying the movement did not stop there and that it meant much more than the mere removal of the Neill Statue. He asked how any man in the Andhradesa could walk with his head erect, so long as the self-respect of the nation could not be maintained.

He described how B. Lakshminarasamma Garu, the old lady patriot, felt on the matter and how she was preparing to offer Satyagraha in a few days. He

appealed to the audience and said that whatever was decided upon must be worked up with implicit faith and unshakeable determination.

The motion was then put to vote and declared unanimously passed. About Rs. 12 were subscribed on the spot for the movement by some of those present.

The day's proceedings came to a close at this stage.

#### OTHER RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were passed by the Conference, when it met on the 13th NOVEMBER in the afternoon. They were put from the chair and passed :

(1) This Conference congratulates Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose and other detenus (recently released) on their great sacrifice, and calls upon the National Congress to try its best to secure the release of the other detenus as well.

(2) This Conference congratulates Mr. Avari, the author of Nagpur Satyagraha as well as his followers, who are undergoing imprisonment at present.

(3) A committee consisting of the following gentlemen is hereby appointed to organise relief by collecting subscriptions etc. in the areas affected by the recent floods, places like Nellore, Bapatla and Cuddapah :—

Messrs. G. Sitharama Sastri, K. Koyi Reddi, Konda Venkatapayya, T. Rami Reddi, V. Raghava Iyengar, K. Nagsewara Rao and B. Sambamurti.

(4) This Conference calls upon the people of Andhradesa to take to the use of khaddar (in preference to other cloth).

(5) As untouchability is a blot upon Hindu society in general, this Conference calls upon all the people of Andhradesa to take steps for its immediate removal as a matter of duty.

(6) This Conference recommends to the National Congress to call upon Congress members in the Council of State, Assembly and the provincial legislatures to keep their seats empty and refrain from further participation in the business of the legislatures, but simply put in attendance so that their seats might not fall vacant.

#### INDEPENDENCE RESOLUTION

The Conference met again on the 14th NOVEMBER. The first resolution moved ran as follows:—

“This Conference recommends to the Indian National Congress to clearly define the word “Swaraj” in article I of the Congress creed as complete independence for India outside the Empire.”

Mr. B. Sambamurti moved the resolution and said that Swaraj was not a thing in the gift of the British and that we ourselves must achieve it. India, he said, was the best Judge in the matter of deciding the form of government that suited it best. After a heated discussion the motion was put to vote and carried by an overwhelming majority.

#### COMMONWEALTH BILL

Mr. H. Sankara Rao moved:—

“This Conference recommends to the Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee that in framing a constitution for India the Commonwealth of India Bill also be considered.” The resolution was accepted without any opposition.

#### AMENDMENTS TO CONGRESS CONSTITUTION

Mr. A. Govindachari moved the following motion:

“This Conference recommends to the Indian National Congress that the following amendments be made in the constitution of the Indian National Congress. And the new rule (1) All such resolution duly given notice of to amend the Congress constitution shall be placed before the subjects committee at the commencement of its proceedings; (2) That the latter half of the time of the subjects committee shall be allotted for the discussion of resolution given notice of by the then members of the Subjects Committee who are not members of the Working Committee; (3) That in rule 30 of clause (b) the words “provided however that no such motion shall be allowed unless it has been previously discussed at a meeting of the Subjects Committee and has received the support of at least a third of the members then present” should be deleted. The motion was carried.

The next resolution ran as follows :—

"This Conference recommends to the ensuing National Congress that while boycotting the Royal Commission a Round Table Committee, representing all parties, be constituted with power to take evidence from all parties and to draw a proper constitution for our country and report the same to the A. I. C. C."

Mr. C. Doraiswami Iyengar, M. L. A., moved the resolution and explained the scope of the resolution. It was passed unanimously.

With this the Conference came to close.

## The U. P. Political Conference

Presiding over the 21st session of the United Provinces Political Conference at Aligarh on the 25th NOVEMBER Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, leader of the Congress Party in the U. P. Legislative Council, referred at the outset to the present communal tension. He believed that the main obstacle to Swaraj was communal distrust and friction. The present fit of madness, he thought, had not sprung from any deep source. Distrust on the one side reacted on the other, and it went on gathering momentum. The real and true remedy lay in a change of heart.

Mr. Pant then explained the manifold evils accompanying the cursed gift of communal representation, and gave several quotations in support of his point, from the speeches and writings of several statesmen and newspapers.

Mr. Pant then explained the Congress attitude towards the Simon Commission, and urged most strongly the necessity of concerted action by all political parties. He said the Congress stood for self-determination and refused to recognise the right of any alien agency to frame the country's constitution. They believed that this insult was deliberate, and prompted by the fact that the country was at present in a helpless condition. It should be remembered that any extension of the reforms or devolution of power to India involved corresponding divestment by Parliament of its own power. No body of men, however honest and righteous, would willingly and voluntarily part with power. "I wish my countrymen to realise the truth, that power to win freedom, lies in us, and that it is childish to pin our faith on the composition of Commissions or to expect anything substantial from them. Self-government is our inherent right and any enquiry or examination of that right is to me meaningless. I hold that this Commission is a gross and deliberate affront and in self-respect, we should boycott it." The President continued :

"It is gratifying that Liberal politicians are for effective and complete boycott of the Commission. There is a general desire for concerted action. In all humility, I would appeal to every Indian to join the Indian National Congress, so that we may be able to give battle to our adversaries. I would suggest that all parties should meet in Madras during the next Christmas week so that leaders can confer among themselves and explore the avenue of unity. An All-India Boycott League may well be organised for carrying on propaganda for the boycott of the Commission."

Concluding, he said, that on the day the Commission lands in Bombay general hartal should be organised all over the country and similar efforts should be made in the towns and provinces which the Commission visits. The Congress and the proposed Boycott League might consider the feasibility of boycotting British goods. While organising boycott on the one side, the leaders should tackle the constructive side of the problem and frame their scheme of Swaraj. The Conference then adjourned.

### 1. Boycott of Statutory Commission

The Conference reassembled at 2 in the afternoon on the 27th NOVEMBER. Pandit Govindballabh Pant presided. Among those present were Babu Sheo Pershad Gupta, Messrs. T. A. K. Sherwani, Nanak Chand, Gulab Singh, Deotra Pershad, Badan Singh, Moulana Hazrat Mohani and Lala Shankerlal of Delhi.

The first resolution adopted favoured boycott of the Commission. It ran as follows :

(a) "While expressing its belief that the future constitution of India could only be based on the principle of self-respect, this conference feels gratified to note that there is unanimity of opinion in the country to boycott the Royal Statutory Commission, and appeals to the people of the United Provinces to make the boycott a success.

(b) "This conference requests the Congress to formulate a scheme of effective boycott for all political parties to follow."

Mr. Kailashnath Katju, in proposing the resolution disputed the British claim to be the sole protectors of the "untouchables" and held that they had done nothing to ameliorate their condition during the last 150 years.

Mr. Sherwani, in supporting the resolution, said that the Congress had always opposed a Commission based on the principle of testing India for self-government, and it would have opposed the Commission even if it had included Indians.

The Government mainly relied on Mussalmans. He exhorted Indian Mussalmans to follow the example of the Egyptians: Persians and Turks. There was no Mussalman outside India who did not fight for freedom. The speaker said that unless the Mussalmans wanted to leave India they should not set fire to their own house. Following the example of the Egyptians who boycotted the Milner Commission, they must not only boycott the Simon Commission, but should have hartals wherever the Commission went. Mr. Sherwani said that interested parties could not be impartial judges, and the Commission therefore could never be just.

The resolution was further supported and carried unanimously.

## 2. Swaraj Constitution

Babu Sheo Pershad Gupta proposed a resolution which requested the Madras Congress to define "Swaraj", and on the basis of such a definition and in consultation with the representatives of all parties and interests in India, prepare a Swaraj constitution.

The speaker said that the constitution, when prepared would declare to the British Government and to the world at large what sort of Government India wanted to have. It would also show that India did not believe in Commissions. Chains of slavery, the speaker said, could not be rent asunder by merely passing resolutions. What they wanted was self-sacrifice and a supreme effort to win freedom.

Mr. Balkishan moved an amendment to the effect, that Swaraj meant complete independence outside the British Empire. The speaker said that, for young India, Swaraj had never any other meaning but that of complete independence. Otherwise they would never have courted prisons in thousands.

Mr. Raghubir Dayal thought that the resolution was useless. Swaraj, being the birthright of every Indian, its meaning was known to each one of them. There was no need for defining it. The resolution would divide party against party and would undo the work of unity achieved by the appointment of the Simon Commission. He appealed for the rejection of the resolution.

The original resolution of Babu Shiva Prasad Gupta was carried.

## 3. Other Resolutions

A resolution declaring that untouchability should be eliminated in India was then passed. The mover said that India had no right to demand freedom unless they themselves treated the seven crores of Untouchables," with due consideration.

The next resolution appealed to the people of the United Provinces to contribute liberally to the National Fund which the Provincial Congress Committee was requested to collect for carrying on Congress work. The Conference then adjourned.

## 4. Joint-Electorates Urged

On the 28th NOVEMBER the Conference commenced its session at 4 in the afternoon.

The first resolution discussed related to joint-electoralates, on lines of the Bombay All-India Congress Committee resolutions. The mover, Mr. Sampurnananda, thought that religion should not find a place in politics. The Hindu and Moslem leaders, in their own interests, kept up communal strife, and, in the guise of religion, advanced their own power. Regarding introduction of reforms into the N.-W. Frontier Province, the speaker thought that the Hindus had no right to oppose it.

Maulana Mahomed Ali held that the reply to Lord Birkenhead's trusteeship theory of minorities, rested with the Hindus. On the day when Mussalmans could trust Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Dr. Moonjee and Lala Lajpat Rai, in preference to lord Birkenhead, the communal troubles in India would come to an end. The Mussalmans would be willing to give their heads for the country, on the day the Hindus gave up the idea of dominating them. Next to communal unity, khaddar alone could solve their social economic and political problems.

Maulana Hazarat Mohani disageded with the wording of the Bombay resolutions. They held that reservation of seats meant separate electorates and indicated Moslem suspicion of the Hindu majority.

Mr. Shuaib Qurashi thought life was not logic ; and though logically, Maulana Hazarat Mohani was correct, in reality the Bombay resolution found a *via media* to total elimination of separate electorates. The final goal could only be reached by satisfactory working of the Bombay resolutions, which would impose confidence and trust among the Hindus and Mussalmans.

#### VOTING RESTRICTED TO KHADDAR CLAD DELEGATES

The President Mr. Govindballab Pant, in putting the resolution favouring general electorates to the decision of the House, asked only Khaddar clad delegates to vote. The resolution, so voted upon, was declared carried. But immediately a number of Moslem students, along with some others wanted to express themselves on the resolution.

Mr. Shamsul Huda, Vakil, wanted to know why the resolution was put in a manner which excluded them from the voting. In case their votes were intentionally kept out, they should have been asked to leave the pandal before the House divided. Thereafter, he left the pandal in protest inviting his friends to follow, which some did.

The President explained that he only obeyed the constitution of the Congress and could not go beyond it. According to the Congress Constitutions he had asked khaddar clad delegates and none others to vote.

This created a general hubbub, when most of the audience stood up round the dais, and many shouted "Namaz."

This brought Dr. Ansari to the rostrum. He said that he was pained to see that sort of spirit being displayed by the Aligarh students. He regretted that they had attempted to break the meeting on the pretext of "Namaz." If they were anxious to say their prayers, they could do so by asking for the adjournment of the House, for some time.

On the suggestion of Dr. Ansari the meeting was adjourned for half an hour.

#### 5 Other Resolutions

On reassembling, the conference proceeded to discuss other resolutions.

The first resolution appealed to the people of the United Provinces to encourage khaddar.

The second resolution expressed sympathy with China in her struggle for freedom, and resentment against the action of the Government in sending Indian troops to China.

The third resolution invited the Provincial Congress Committee to undertake, in right earnest, the constructive programme of the Congress to establish Congress Committees in each village and town in the United Provinces and also to reorganise the Hindustani Seva Dal. They were asked to encourage prohibition in the provinces and to make efforts to remove the causes of discord in local bodies and district boards. Lastly they were asked to help industrial or agricultural shows or exhibitions in the province.

The fourth resolution expressed regret that the Congress did not use Hindustani as the official language. The resolution expected that the Madras Congress would use Hindustani as its official language.

The last resolution expressed sympathy with Indians abroad, and condemned the attitude of the British Government in allowing Indians to be deprived of their rights in the colonies and other places beyond the seas.

The Conference then adjourned *sine die*.

## The All India Aryan Congress

The All-India Aryan Congress commenced its session on the 4th NOVEMBER in a huge pandal specially constructed for the occasion in the People's Park facing the Delhi Fort. The compound was tastefully decorated and beautifully beflagged. Delegates numbered about 3,000, most of them from the Punjab, the United Provinces and Behar.

After Pandit Ramachand, Chairman of the Reception Committee, had welcomed the delegates, Lala HANSRAJ delivered his presidential address. He called upon the members of the Arya Samaj to show toleration, and not to be unnerved by the murderous attacks of Mussalmans. The Samaj had not retaliated. Such assaults should not form part of proselytising activities. Moslems and Christian missionaries had distributed volumes of literature against the Aryan religion. Mussalmans had written at least 300 books, tracts and pamphlets against the Arya Samaj with a view to abuse Maharshi Swami Dayanand, the founder of the samaj, and had cast aspersions on his sincerity and simplicity. But, he was proud to say the Arya Samaj had never taken the law into its own hands. He advised the Aryan Congress to form sub-committees in every part of the country to keep a strict watch on literatures likely to rouse communal feelings, and requested the Mussalmans to do the same.

Touching on Shuddhi, Lala Hansraj said :—As the Arya Samaj was not prepared to limit the door of their religion to only those who were born in it, the religions counting on conversion of the whole of India to their alien faiths, felt irritated when their pet schemes and fond hopes were shaken by Swami Dayanand's Mission. To the speaker, it appeared that the Mahomedan opposition to the Hindus' right of conversion was based on the disappointment of their hopes. The Mussalmans were preparing for the conversion of Hindus in large numbers ; but the acceptance of Shuddhi by all religious sects among the Hindus had foiled their attempt, and they were terribly baffled.

Alluding to the question of music before mosques, the President admitted that although in some cases, the local authorities, in certain places had imposed unfair restrictions on the Arya Samaj processions, the Government's policy as a whole had not been against their just right of conducting processions accompanied with music. He asked the Samaj leaders, unhesitatingly to put forward their case before the authorities, and he was sure that the officials would not act in disregard of their lawful and age-long rights.

Proceeding, the President drew attention to the strained feelings between the two communities and said many Hindus viewed with great alarm the daily assaults and the cold-blooded murders of the Arya Samajists and the threatening letters received by them. But even in his old age, declared Lala Hansraj, he did not despair of the situation that had arisen. His religious sentiments rose to the highest point when he heard of such assaults. The history of the world had shown that the more the Christians in olden days were tormented and burnt and murdered, the more did Christianity spread. The Muslims who by murdering Pandit Lekram thought that vedic missionaries would disappear, must have been astonished to find how rapidly the missionary work of the Arya Samaj spread after his death. Similarly the assassin of the late Swami Shradanand must have heard that, after the martyrdom of the Swamiji, even conservative Pandits of Benares agreed to the principles of Shuddhi and started conversion of non-Hindus to the Hindu faith.

Continuing the speaker, pointing to the social evils in the country, dealt with the necessity of prohibiting early marriages and urged upon the Hindus to adopt a system of widow remarriage and pleaded for the establishment of an organisation to nurse the orphans and the uncared for children going astray and falling a prey to other religions.

Concluding, the President appealed to the Hindus as well as the Mussalmans to leave aside petty quarrels, maintain good relations and remain united together. Thus alone India, as a nation, would progress, declared Lala Hans Raj.

### Discussion On Resolutions

The Aryan Congress resumed its session at one p. m. On the 5th NOVEMBER. The pandal was packed to overflowing, and attendance was estimated to exceed 10,000.

On the motion of Bhai Paramanand, the Congress adopted a resolution, all standing, bearing on record its deep horror at the dastardly assassination of Swami Shradhanand and other Arya Samaj leaders, and viewing with contempt and indignation the efforts at terrorising the Hindu community in general and the Arya Samaj in particular by a succession of cowardly murders of prominent workers by Mussalmans.

The mover, in a lengthy speech pointed out that the Shuddhi movement was started as a result of the Malabar rebellion six years ago, when the Hindus were persecuted and murdered, followed by mass forcible conversions. The Hindus, including Sanatanists, then realised and laid down that it was their duty to bring back such persons to the Hindu fold. The mover recalled the communal riots dating back from Multan, and declared that he gave up the dream of Hindu-Moslem unity at Saharanpore when he came to know that the mentality of the Khilafat propagandists was to terrorise the Hindu community. He twitted Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Congress President, for his futile efforts at the Unity Conference, and said no Hindu would ever agree to the slaughter of cows. The Congress also condemned the murderous assaults on Rajpal, Swami Satyanand and other workers connected with the Hindu Sangathan movement, and appreciated the heroic conduct of Swami Swatantranand and other Hindus who helped in the rescue work.

The Chairman of the Reception Committee then explained that in view of the District Magistrate's decision, they had abandoned the main procession.

The decision was received with indignation and the delegates declared that they were ready to resort to passive resistance, and characterised the subjects committee's decision as ill-advised.

An uproarious disorder ensued, until Lala Hansraj, the president, relieved the situation by requesting the delegates to send representatives to the subjects committee in the evening, with a view to an open discussion on the subject. He threatened to adjourn the proceedings of the Congress if disorder continued to prevail. Calm having been restored, discussion on the resolutions was resumed.

A number of delegates however left the Congress, and convened a meeting upon to enlist volunteers for passive resistance in the event of its being decided upon.

Mr. Krishna, Editor of *The Pratap* of Lahore, then moved the following resolution :—"This Congress is of the opinion that the veiled threats in a section of the Moslem press and the letters addressed simultaneously to a number of prominent Hindus threatening murder, lend support to the widespread belief that these murders and assaults are the result of a conspiracy with brains and money behind it, and calls upon all the Hindu members of the central and provincial legislatures to insist on the institution of an impartial commission of enquiry into this affair, to unearth this conspiracy."

Mr. Deshabandhu Gupta, in supporting the resolution, said that circumstantial evidence in the recent Lahore cases had sufficiently proved that there was a Moslem conspiracy. A delegate from Moradabad opposed the motion.

The resolution was then put to vote and declared carried.

### Untouchability Question

On the motion of Lala Hans Raj the Congress unanimously passed resolutions urging the granting of liberal facilities to new converts, the removal of untouchability, the upliftment of the depressed classes, the establishment of Akharas for physical training, and the encouragement of cottage industries.

### The Calcutta Pact

The Congress accorded its approval to the resolution regarding conversion and reconversion passed by the Unity Conference at Calcutta and endorsed by the All-India Congress Committee, but opined that no improvement was possible until the

resolution acquired the sanction of the law and severe steps were taken against those who kidnapped minors.

The Congress however recorded its emphatic condemnation of the resolution of the Unity Conference regarding cow slaughter and music before mosques, for the following reasons :—

(1) It went even beyond the Muslim demand for undisturbed prayers at certain hours, and prohibited all processions before old as well as new mosques which may be erected in future.

(2) It permitted cow slaughter in the holy places of Hindus, and it removed all municipal and sanitary restrictions on the slaughter of animals, by permitting every Muslim house to be converted into a slaughter-house, not only during the Bakr-id, but during the ordinary days as well.

Bhai Paramanand in supporting the motion, questioned the jurisdiction of the All-India Congress Committee to decide this question which involved the religious and social rights of Hindus, without obtaining the approval of the Hindu religious bodies. The speaker remarked that the Congress had been reduced to the level of other All-India organisations, such as the All-India Agarwal and the All-India Brahman Conferences (laughter and hear, hear). He declared that Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar and a handful of Bengalees, had no right to sell away the rights of the Hindus and injure their sentiments for a mess of pottage (cries of "shame, shame.")

Concluding, Bhai Parmanand deplored that the Hindus had fallen a prey to Arabian culture, which regarded as harmful all kinds of fine arts, including sculpture, painting and music.

The most important resolution of the session was taken up and moved by Mr. Narayan Swami, President of the All-India Aryan League. The resolution, as is well-known, is the result of the conference between representatives of the delegates and the members of the Subjects Committee last night, and proposed the formation of a committee for enrolment of ten thousand volunteers and for collection of Rs. 50,000 and for adopting all essential measures, including satyagraha, which may be necessitated by the exigencies of the situation in any affected area, subject to the final approval of the All-India Aryan League.

Pandit Nanak Chand opposed the motion because he said the Government had not yet declared a policy of banning Hindu processions. He advised the audience not to resort to Satyagraha, as they had to do further constructive work in the nature of Suddhi. The resolution was carried by a large majority.

### **Demand for Joint Electorates**

The Aryan Congress adopted without much discussion resolutions recommending joint electorates instead of the existing separate electorates and urging the formation of sub-committees by the provincial Arya Samaj bodies with a view to keep strict control over communal literatures.

The Congress accepted the suggestion that the 23rd December be celebrated as the Shraddhanand Day.

The Congress congratulated the Hindus on the wonderful restraint they had displayed in the face of the gravest provocations ; but feared that if the Government did not take effective measures and the Muslim leaders also did not do their duty, the Hindu community would not be responsible for what would happen. The Congress was of the opinion that the open demand of certain Muslim moulvies that those non-Muslims who criticised adversely the Prophet of Islam or those who joined the Vedic fold should be dealt with according to the Islamic law, constitute an overt incitement to violence and a flagrant defiance of the law of the land. It therefore called upon the Government to take strong action against such moulvies, and issue strict instructions to executive officers to take criminal proceedings against such persons.

### **LEADERS' EXHORTATION**

Before the Congress dispersed, Lala Lajpat Rai and Pandit Malaviya were asked to deliver speeches. Lalaji stated that although he was not a member of any Arya Samaj at present, he had his full sympathy with the movement, and was



ever ready to share their difficulties and troubles (Cheers). India, he said, was suffering from the disease of passing resolutions. Unless they took to constructive work, mere passing of resolutions would not help them in achieving their object. The Aryan Congress had undertaken a stupendous task by adopting the Satyagraha resolution, and he exhorted them not to retreat from the path of duty. They need not be disheartened even if they had to die, but should invite martyrdom in order to safeguard their religious rights.

Pandit MALAVIYA wished that the Congress had been held immediately after the dastardly murder of Swami Shraddhanand. Although he did not agree with all their resolutions, he was fully convinced that only that religion prospered in this world which preached piety, love and toleration and not the one which prescribed the persecution of people. He congratulated the Hindus on their toleration and restraint. He hoped that the Hindus would always remain firm in that attitude. After paying a tribute to the memory of Swami Shraddhanand, he advised the Hindus, particularly the Punjabis, to learn Hindi and encourage physical training.

After the President's closing remarks the proceedings of the Congress terminated at 6 p.m.

## The Republican Congress

On the 28th DECEMBER 1927 at the Congress pandal, Madras the Republican Congress opened its first session, Mr. Bulusu Sambamurti opening the Congress and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru presiding over it. The proceedings began with the singing of National songs.

### Opening Address

Mr. B. Sambamurti, who opened the Congress, explained the genesis of the republican movement in this country and said that in 1925 they held the first Political Sufferers' Conference at Cawnpore presided over by Swami Gobindanand. At that time a Political Workers' Committee was appointed and some work was done. The second conference of political workers was held at Gauhati and there it was resolved that an active committee be appointed and a programme drawn up. In 1927 the Executive Committee of the Political Workers' Conference met a number of times and it was ultimately resolved that the Political Sufferers' Conference must be called Swadhana Bharat Sangam and that complete national independence must be established in India as early as possible. At the Gauhati Congress, the republican movement in India gained considerable force by the intense propaganda of General Avari who took it upon himself that a beginning should be made to declare a republic in India. Mr. Avari's programme was that every place in India should be first declared autonomous republics so that in a year or two the whole nation might be declared a federation of the United States of India. Meetings had been held in Nagpur and Mr. Avari was authorised to declare Nagpur a republic in the first instance. Mr. Avari gave an ultimatum to the Governor of the Central Provinces that if the Government did not vacate, Nagpur would be declared a republic. Mr. Avari's scheme was published in the press and that scheme was that a parallel government should be run in India consisting of parallel post office, parallel mint, parallel court and army and the machinery necessary for the Government was sought to be established by him. First of all the programme taken up by Mr. Avari was to disobey the provisions of the Arms Act. Mr. Avari first organised individual civil resistance to the Arms Act, and in the course of his organisation he delivered an ultimatum to the governor of C. P. and the result was that he was now in jail undergoing four years' rigorous imprisonment. In the jail he was now fighting the battle of the whole of India. To-day was the 81st day of his hunger strike, and it seemed that Mr. Avari would be the Mazzini of India. It might be that Mr. Avari might give up his body in the course of the next few days out of which the fire of India might be roused and there would be a dynamic programme in the country in the

course of the next few months. The future potentialities of the movement would determine what they should do to bring about the freedom of India. Now that the National Congress declared the goal of India to be full national independence, it was hoped that an organised band of workers appointed this year by the Republican Congress would bring about that consummation in Calcutta the foundation of which was just laid at the Madras Congress this year.

### Welcome Address

Mr. Venkatasubramania Chetti as Chairman of the Reception Committee delivered an address in the course of which he said :

Brothers and sisters,—I am grateful for the unique privilege given to me to welcome you, the Republicans of India and I do so very heartily and with the earnest request that you would overlook such shortcomings as are due to the lateness in organising this, the first Republican Congress. You are all welcome, brothers, as the fighters for the equality of all nations and the national independence of India.

Brothers, it is a welcome sign that this first gathering of All-India Republicans has begun under such happy auspices, for is it not a triumph for the Republicans that the great Indian National Congress has adopted a resolution allying itself with the League against Imperialism, which was established in Brussels in February 1927 and adopted the independence resolution? While we are really grateful for the leaders who have taken this great stand, it cannot be gainsaid that a body like ourselves is necessary to carry on the message of freedom, unhampered by any considerations of immediate political events. For our fight is not going to be that of one day, but is one that will have to be carried on incessantly, in a crusading spirit till imperialism is buried deep in the Atlantic Ocean, without any possibility of resurrection, and until man shall be able to live free to develop himself without being thwarted by capitalistic combinations and organised armaments.

The dawn of the modern capitalistic imperialism can be definitely traced back to the date of the first organisation of the financial bank, which by rendering the accumulation of flowing capital easy created the great corporations, cartels and trusts, which by their monopolies and spheres of influence have encompassed the whole earth. The expansion of territorial control by the planting of colonies and occupation of virgin soils have rendered this flow of capital easy and as a result, by the beginning of this century, we see that no part of the earth is uncovered by these monster trusts and cartels. The grab of land, which marked the occupation of Africa during the last century typifies the scramble for spheres of influence and the net result of all these, was the enthronement of imperialism as the guiding force of the States. Of the powers that have carried this imperialism to the ends of earth of their banner, are the British and Americans. The great oil, cotton, steel and iron trusts are so powerful and so dominating that the British and American States quail before them. Economic exploitation of other soils necessitated the rapid increase of murderous weapons and to-day the menace of armaments is so great that a conference on disarmament had to be called for. Germany which rose as a great imperialist power during the latter half of the century and the first decade of this century was crippled and to-day the world is free to be exploited by the twin brothers, British and American imperialisms.

### A SAD IRONY

To us British imperialism is no strange thing. We are now in its grip. It has been responsible for the poverty and misery of the Indians and its sway is enormous. What with its colonies in America, Australia, its suzerainty over India, its death grip over Egypt, Iraq, and China, it is the greatest menace to the freedom of the world. But what should we say of American imperialism? It is one of the saddest ironies of history that a State which has been ushered into existence with the enunciation of one of the noblest principles on earth, which I should like to place before you, should develop within the shortest period of a nation's life into capitalistic and imperialistic menace of the world. The first founders of the American Republic said : "We believe these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by the Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

The whole world coming under the sway of these caucuses, the path of redemption may look well nigh impossible. But history tells us that the mighty empires of the past, the Carthaginian, the Roman and the Babylonian and the Ottoman were shattered to pieces and I believe the days are near for the empires of this century, to crumble to pieces and enabling the oppressed nations of the world to enjoy the fundamental right to be freed from all foreign domination, however benevolent it may be. Russia again had shown that even the most autocratic empire can be thrown to the dust and a people's Republic established. About the struggle of the suppressed nationalities of the world and about how Russia threw down the Czarist Imperialism, our President who rendered yeoman service to the cause of Indian independence at the Brussels Congress, 1927, would be able to tell you in great detail. I intend only to impress upon you the great danger which faces India and other parts of the world in the shape of imperialism and of the imperative duty of fighting it to the bitter end.

The growth of imperialism of the modern day has brought out another fantastic theory, namely the whiteman's burden and white race superiority. This is due to sheer arrogance. All men are equal and given equal opportunities, there has never been an instance where a coloured man failed and a white man succeeded. Japan gave a lie direct and exploded this theory and I am sure when the next war breaks, as is likely soon, between the coloured and the white people, the last vestiges of white race supremacy will be shattered to pieces. India and you, brother Republicans, have a great duty in this matter to see that racial arrogance is rooted out of the earth. As to the ways and means of fighting, I am sure, you will by collaboration and on the advice of our comrades draft a programme of work which will be sufficient to achieve the end.

This is not all. We have to give a clear lead to our countrymen in certain matters that affect our political status. The Simon Commission ought to be boycotted and its work made impossible.

While on the subject of the Commission I cannot but refer to Birkenhead's bluster and to the provoking utterances he made in British Parliament. The only fitting answer will be a complete repudiation of the right of aliens in the control of India; and a declaration of a united federal Republic of India. But the pathetic picture is to witness Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's and other labour politicians, whom we have been looking upon as friends of India, turn imperialistic and deny Indians' right of self-determination. It is a timely reminder to some of our politicians to discover the so-called Labourites in their true colours.

#### INDIA'S GOAL

More important than the boycott of the Commission is the necessity for the declaration of our rights as a nation and as citizens of India. We, Republicans, hold the right of self-determination dear and cannot barter it away for any advantages. We stand upon that right and declare our independence. India has to be free for her own sake and if not for herself, at least for the sake of world progress. It is on account of the control of India that England is able to wield influence in Mesopotamia, Iraq, China; it is for the sake of India again that Egypt was seized and that England is suspicious of Russia. It is to maintain its sway over the Eastern seas that England wants naval bases at Trincomalee and Singapore. India owes it to herself and the world that she should be free and wipe out all the accumulated sins of a century and a half of being a part of the British Empire. I am for complete independence for India and I want that this Republican Congress should declare that freedom of India from outside control. I do not believe in any paper constitution. But I want to impress upon you the necessity for the provision in any constitution of India, the duty of the State for the supply of all the needs of the citizens, food, clothing and shelter. Without these there can be no improvement in the lot of human beings and the State will but consist of discontented mass of underfed humanity and overfed few rich. In this sense, I do not approve the constitutions recently promulgated by Messrs. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, A. Rangaswami Iyengar and C. Vijayaraghava Chariar. I do not at all agree with Mrs. Besant's Bill which gives the ultimate authority to the Secretary of State in the British Parliament. Let us not be deluded by the words 'Dominion Status' and 'Commonwealth'. There is only one status that is worth occupying and that is

the status of an independent India. Nothing else is our goal. Nothing less is our goal. Let us proclaim it and let us assert it.

I claim independence for my land and I expect that every one who is born in this sacred land will stand up for the freedom of the mother country, even as Rani Lakshmi Bai did. Let us draft our declaration and let us proclaim our nation's sovereignty.

We are in stirring times and we have to make history. The few years of this century have already witnessed the establishment of the Republics of Russia, China, Turkey, Germany. I need only exhort you to do your duty by the altar of the motherland and ere long establish the Republic of India, free from all foreign domination and control.

After the Welcome Address, on the motion of Pandit Gouri Sanker Misra seconded by Mr. Aijunlal Setty and supported by Messrs. M. S. Subramania Aiyar and Tiimala Rao, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was elected President of the Congress.

### The Presidential Address

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru after thanking the organisers of the Congress for electing him as President, observed that he had been in no way connected with the workers and comrades who organised Swadhana Bharat Sangham because he was not present in India at that time. His attraction for a Republican ideal was very great and if it was possible for him to give his services to promote that ideal he felt it his bounden duty to do so. Some people said that now that the National Congress declared its goal to be full national independence, there was no necessity for a Republican Congress. Primarily they should take their stand on the principle that Swaraj was India's birthright. When there was domination and oppression there was bound to be terrible suffering. Even though the Congress passed a resolution of independence a new organisation should be formed to carry on propaganda and try to convert those who had vague ideas of independence and did not know what Republicanism was. The object of the resolution of independence passed by the Congress was the withdrawal of the British from India. It ought to be the duty of the new organisation to lay stress on things which were to be done to give effect to the resolution of independence. In the first instance the Republican ideal should be promulgated. The main lesson of this year's Congress was that it had been the most important session because it really changed the direction in which the Congress had been so far moving. In one or two matters it gave a new angle of vision. Since the failure of the non-co-operation movement the Congress had been drifting to middle class or Babu politics and was losing the support of the masses. Various forces were at work to-day which were important and which were likely to shape the future of the country. It was important for them to form some kind of organisation which would keep the National Congress up to the mark and also prepare the country not only in a Republican ideal, but also in a right Republican ideal. The world had adopted Republicanism. Some countries had some kind of monarchies but almost every body realised that Republicanism was the only thing that was necessary for the future. Monarchies wherever they existed now were not likely to survive very long. Republicanism had come to stay. It would be for India to determine what kind of Republicanism would be best suited to Indian conditions. Did India wish the Government of this country to be based more or less on the exploitation of one by another or did she wish to remove the exploitation and the causes thereof so that there might be equality between the various members of the Republic? That was the problem before them. The Republican propaganda should make it clear on what principles India wished to establish her Republican Government. It was right for India to keep apart from international complications. They had enough of the British connection and India should try not to have any entanglements in the future with any foreign country or organisation. None the less, in order to fashion their policy they should understand what was happening in the rest of the world. The Republican Congress organisation should have simple rules for its work.

Mr. Subrahmanya Aiyar and Mr. Sambamurti explained the substance of the President's address in Tamil and Telugu to the meeting.

### Resolutions

The following resolutions were passed at the Republican Congress held on the 29th DECEMBER in the afternoon.

"This Congress places on record the deep sorrow of the Indian nation on the sudden demise of Hakim Ajmal Khan, ex-President of the Indian National Congress, at the critical hour in her struggle for freedom."

"This Congress calls upon its constituents and the peasants and workers of India to concentrate upon the organisation of peasant-land-committees to fight imperialism in all forms and places and realise complete emancipation economic social and political."

"This Congress expresses its deep admiration for the patriotism and heroism of Alluri Seetharama Raju who fought bravely for the freedom of our Motherland."

"This Congress condemns the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti by the Government of America."

"This Congress is emphatically of opinion that the Royal Commission should be boycotted in all stages and activities and call upon the people of India to observe hartals and organise other mass demonstrations on the day of landing of the Commission in India and thereafter in all places to be visited by them."

"The Congress exhorts the people of India to wear khaddar and observe Swadeshi in general and organise boycott of British goods in particular as a political weapon of the first magnitude."

"This Congress is strongly of opinion that all social inequalities must be at once done away with as a principal step for the establishment of the Republic of India."

"This Congress expresses the deep sympathy of the Indian Nation on the 81st day of the hunger strike of General Mancharshaw Awar and exhorts the people to support the Nagpur Arms Act Satyagraha movement with men and money."

"This Congress congratulates the Neill Statue Satyagrahis on their sturdy patriotism and sacrifice and exhorts people to lead the movement to a success by supporting the same with men and money."

"This Congress hereby declares that the sovereignty of India is vested solely and wholly in the people of India and repudiates any claim of the British Parliament to interfere in the Government of India in either internal or external affairs."

"This Congress upholds universal adult suffrage."

"The All-India Republican Congress sitting in Madras views with indignation the judicial murder of some of our young patriots of Kakori case who have paid the extreme penalty of death for their burning love for their country and strongly condemns the brutal and vindictive sentences passed on them."

"This Congress heartily appreciated the patriotism and self-sacrifice of the Kakori case and other political prisoners and conveys its heart-felt sympathy to their families, their friends and associates."

The constitution of the Congress was passed after the first two resolutions were passed. The Standing Committee of the Congress consisted of 75 members from different provinces of India and other parts of the world, in the same proportion as the Indian National Congress. The Executive Committee consisted of the President, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru ; Secretaries, Swami Govindanand (Sindh), Srimati Parvati Devi (Punjab), Muzafar Ahmed (Bengal) ; and Treasurer, Rajaram (Lahore).

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who had to go away to other engagements made a few remarks in the course of which he asked them to co-operate with him to make the work of the Congress during the coming year a success. He then pointed out to them the need for strengthening their organisation. Propaganda work, he said, should be undertaken and for the present they should divert all their energies in this channel of organisation and propaganda without which there was the danger of failure. They would have to face a good deal of opposition not only from people who did not agree with them but also from Government and Government agencies. Therefore they had to organise themselves as strongly as possible before chalking out any definite programme. The Conference was then dissolved.

## The States' Subjects' Conference

Amidst scenes of great enthusiasm the All-India States' Peoples' Conference opened in Bombay on the 17th DECEMBER 1927. A large number of delegates from various Indian States, attended. The gathering was of a representative character.

In the course of his address Dewan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao said :—

"A free, strong, united, self-governing and self-supporting India is our aim and ideal. In familiarising the people of the States with our national ideals, your services are invaluable and this conference is doing its best to bring the States into general harmony with the political developments in British India.

"There are at present some very eminent public men in India, who have taken the view that it is better to leave the Indian States alone to work out their own salvation. But it is obvious however that, in our national emancipation and for the development of India as a whole into a self-governing State, the people of British India and the Indian States have to act in concert till the goal is reached. It is unthinkable that the States can remain unaffected by any scheme of Swaraj for India as a whole."

Referring to the problem of defence, and the fiscal and opium policy of the Government of India as instances where there was identity of interest between the Indian States and British India, the President said : "British India and the Indian States are already acting together in many matters involving broad questions of national policy. The range of matters in which the States and the British Indian provinces are realising their dependence on each other, is daily increasing, and their dealings with each other have already established by precedent and usage, a loose kind of tie and certain rights and obligations, though they are not defined by statute and crystallised in a written constitution common to both of them.

"In our relations with the outside world, India is regarded as a single unit, and there is in our international relations, no distinction between British India and the Indian States. The disabilities suffered by Indians in the British Colonies and foreign lands extend to British Indian subjects, as well as to the subjects of the States.

"In these circumstances, the exact position of the States in All-India polity has been the subject of serious thought for several years. In advocating a new constitutional structure linking up the Indian States with British India, we are only pressing for a vital reform which was foreseen as inevitable 10 years ago."

Discussing the position that the Princes will occupy in the new Indian Constitution, and the probable attitude they will take, the President said :—"The position of the States in the future constitution, both in regard to the discharge of common obligations and in regard to their rights of internal administration, would be, in my opinion, much better than now. Notwithstanding their treaties, the States are now squeezed by the 'gentle' persuasions of Political Officers and the Political Department of the Government of India. This cannot happen in a constitution where their rights and obligations are clearly defined. If it is necessary for the Indian Princes to make any sacrifices of their present powers and position with a view to create a new constitution for the whole of India, I trust they will not hesitate to do so."

Referring to the position that small States, no better than petty zamindars would occupy in the new constitution, he said, "It is unthinkable that they should be put in the same category with Hyderabad, Mysore, Baroda or Kashmir. The problem requires very careful consideration.

"More important and of more practical interest than the question of the evolution of a Federal Constitution for the whole of India, is the question of Reform in the internal administration of the Indian States. A Government which owes its

progress to the personal character of its ruler, can never afford any guarantee for progress. A settled constitution which recognises the people's responsibility for the administration and contains all the essential elements of popular Government, is the only safeguard for the protection of the people."

He proceeded : "A comprehensive enquiry into the problems relating to Indian States and their future position in a self-governing India, is urgently called for." Referring to the announcement of the Viceroy regarding the appointment of an expert Committee he says : "It is clear to my mind, that a machinery for investigating the whole series of problem for bringing the States into constitutional relations with British India, has not yet been thought of as yet."

After exposing the nature of the trusteeship theory, the President concluded : "The Indian National Congress, the Muslim League and the National Liberal Federation, the Hindu Mahasabha and other political organisations in British India, are now actively engaged in examining the question of a new constitution for India. The A. I. C. C. has charged the Working Committee of the Congress to frame a constitution in consultation with the various political parties in the country. It is therefore desirable that the Executive Committee of this Conference should secure the co-operation of, and collaborate with, the political organisations in British India, in devising a new constitutional character for the whole of India.

### Welcome Address

The following are extracts from the welcome address, delivered by Mr. Govind Lal Sivalal Motilal, Chairman of the Reception Committee :—

An announcement of a Committee has been made recently by the Viceroy, to enquire into the nature of the existing treaties and make recommendations. Gentlemen you will observe that this Committee is also to enquire not only into the obligations imposed upon each party by the terms of the treaties but also as to the force the departures from those treaties possess.

Do you not know too well to be under any hallucination the outcome of such Committees and Commissions? But let us assume that the recommendations of the Committees will reinstate the Princes in their original position or even above it by recommending new treaties between the Governments. Yet I wonder what power will the Committee place in the hands of the Princes for holding the other party to the carrying out of the terms of those engagements. The power which the Princes can in this situation look with some confidence is the support and the good will of their own people and that of British India by entering into an honourable partnership with them.

The hereditary Prince who succeeds to the Gaddi or Musnad is the Ruler of a State and he is the head of the administration. His will is supreme in all branches of the Government. He appoints all officers Executive, Judicial, or Revenue or any other and he can remove them at his pleasure. Promotions and degradations depend solely upon sweet will. He makes and unmakes laws. Systems of law and procedure are unknown in a majority of States. Where some fragments of law exist, the Ruler can set them at naught by his will at any moment. He can supersede the Courts of law appointed by himself, he can appoint special commissions and tribunals to hear certain cases over-riding the jurisdiction of his Courts and can appoint Benches on the choice of a litigant on payment of Nazari by him, he orders State Courts to put the imprimature of its scale on the decisions of an extraneous body to give it the force of a "Courts" decree, so that it may be executed in a British Court of Law, he overtly and covertly makes orders in cases standing before the State Courts for compliance by his obedient servants the judges, he can turn down the decision of the highest of his judicial Courts and refer the decision at his discretion to another set of persons, he can refer the decision of the Highest Tribunal to the executive to advise him whether it is correct. He can spend the whole of the Revenue in any way he likes, a large or a major part of it generally goes to his extravagance, while the poor ryots, his subjects are starving for want of food. Even a king of the richest country in Europe has not so much allowance for his private purposes as a Raja of this place. He can get a part of the Revenue allotted for State purpose to be used for his tables or for his attendance. He can levy taxes and impose rates. He receives Nazars from rural officers who in their turn collect much more from the peasants and labourers in the field to meet the Nazars. Before making

appointments he can put it to a virtual auction as if it were to the highest bidder. He can deprive any one of his subjects of his or her liberty. He can dispossess people of their property. He can detain a citizen for any length of time in prison without semblance of trial or without bringing any charge against him if he so wills it. He prevents from holding a meeting and responsible speakers from addressing it ; if they want to make any public representation they cannot do it. He can arrest any Editor of a paper however rational its criticism may have been ; he can proscribe any paper or magazine entering into his State. He can order the best of his people to be removed or deported and can interdict entry of the noblest of India's sons into his territory. In short, he is the Monarch of all he surveys and there is none to dispute his despotism. Gentlemen, I do not say that in every State every Prince does all or any of these acts everyday of his life, but I maintain that this kind of the exercise of absolute power are neither uncommon nor rare. As against this it gives me great pleasure to say there are States whose Rulers are above some of these evils. But the point I have to make is that there is no check to the Ruler's arbitrary and absolute power, constitutional or otherwise. The Non-intervention policy of the Government of India when people's interests are concerned has had its part in aggravating this tendency of despotism. Some of them, of course, encourage Education, Art and Industry ; a few of them introduced Representative Institutions in their States even before they came into existence in British India ; others introduced free and compulsory education, established Universities as in Hyderabad and Mysore, and have fixed Civil lists, all honour to them. But the point remains, all this depends upon the Ruler's sweet will alone ; the system is there and system alone have to grapple with the problem in this light. Here I ask you, have I in any way overdrawn the picture ? I am sure what your answer will be, but I do not desire to pursue the subject further though undoubtedly there remains much more to be said about it.

The Judiciary is rarely independent, and corruption is rampant. Honesty is at a discount.

Another feature of the Judicial administration is the long delay in the decision of cases. Several years pass before any decision whether just or unjust is given and one can well imagine the strain to parties are put on account of this delay. It is universal experience that justice delayed is justice denied. The worst of it is that such delays occur in criminal cases too where the hardships of the delay increase tenfold.

Some States have on the analogy of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council for India a tribunal to which appeals lie from the State Courts. One naturally expects that the personnel of an august body like this would be composed of upright and straightforward men of sound and deep learning possessing great legal experience and knowledge. But what are the facts ? Heads of departments who hardly possess judicial frame of mind and know little of law and are of a status from whose departments Appeals may be are diafied to compose the Bench of the highest Tribunals in the States. Of their principle and independence more need not be said.

The lower services are corrupt to the core. The people are subjected to all sorts of exactions. Extortions, malversation and arbitrary rule prevails from top to bottom in the States. In short, life nor honour—and we value honour many times more precious than life and property—nor property is safe in a State. It cannot be said that the prevalence of such corruption in the services is an indication of their incapacity for administration. If one would care to go deep into the matter and try to discover why so much corruption exists, it would be clear ; that wrong selection of persons, low salaries, uncertainty of tenure, lack of expert supervision are among the reasons that give rise to such corruptions.

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# The Indian National Congress.

OPENING DAY—26TH DECEMBER 1927.

Impressive and solemn scenes marked the opening of the 42nd session of India's National Parliament in the Tilak Mandap, Madras on the 26th December 1927. Fine weather prevailed and brilliant sun-shine overhead. The session was programmed to begin at 2 p.m. From 12 visitors and delegates were admitted into the pandal and in less than an hour, the pandal was simply and elegantly decorated. Tricolours were hung from every part of the pandal and the central pillars were covered with tricolour Khaddar. Gaily coloured festoons were hung all around and portraits of leaders were fixed to most of the pillars. Inspiring mottoes greeted the eyes as one came up the main passage and the first read: "Are we children to be examined". Others ran "not for us to lower the flag", "India expects everyman to do his duty" and "We rise or sink together". The dais was most artistically decorated. Under a brilliant canopy sat the President and by him were seated the seasoned soldiers of freedom and distinguished visitors whom the President had invited. On either side sat the members of the Reception Committee, A. I. C. C. members and donors and other distinguished visitors. Over the dais was painted a picture of "Bharat Mata" and the painting bore the national symbol Charka and the national cry "Bande-Mataram". Artistically arranged festoons of coloured lights heightened the effect. Loud speakers were installed in the pandal and they carried speeches to the remotest corners of the pandal. About fifty yards down the dais was put up a rostrum for the speakers and underneath it was a large size portrait of Mahatma Gandhi.

The prominent members of the Justice party were seated on the dais. These included the Raja of Panagal, Dewan Bahadur Govindraghavier and Thanickachalam Chetty, Sir K. V. Reddi, Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar, and the Hon. Raghavendra Rao (Minister C. P.). Dr. Ansari went to the dais through an arch of staves presented by the volunteers. Mahatma Gandhi whose attendance at the Congress was considered doubtful till this noon was among the ex-Presidents in the procession and was vociferously cheered. Others on the dais were the Ali brothers, Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. Besant and Major Graham Pole, Mr. Purcell, Mr. Mardy Jones, Mr. C. Pratt, Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtulla, President of the Indian Commercial Congress, Mr. C. V. S. Narasimha Raju, Mr. R. K. Shanmugham Chetty, Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu, Dr. U. Rama Rao, Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar, Mr. Satyamurthi, Sir R. Venkataram Naidu, Mr. Yakub Hossain, Sj. Rajendra Prasad (Bihar), Pandit Jawaharlal (U. P.), Mr. Deshpande (Karnatak), Dr. Satyapal (Panjab), Mr. Gobind Vallabh Pant (U. P.), Dr. Moonje (C. P.), Mr. Vallabhai Patel (Gujerat), Mr. T. C. Goswami, Mr. S. C. Mitra, Mr. Nirmal Ch. Chunder, Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar (Bengal), Hon. Messrs Subbarayan and Arogyaswami Mudaliar and Ranga Natha Mudaliar (Madras Ministers), Mr. G. A. Natesan and Pandit Malaviya.

The Presidential procession was led by a bevy of lady volunteers who were next followed by the regular volunteer corps. The volunteers stationed

themselves on both sides of the passage from the gateway to the dais and made an arch with their batons under which the leader, who formed the presidential procession, marched. The leaders marched up in pairs—Mr. Srinivasa Iyenger and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mahatma Gandhi and Maulana Mahomed Ali, Pt Malaviya and Dr. Besant, Moulana Shaikat Aii and Mr. Sen Gupta and the Chairman and the President-elect.

The chorus then sang national songs of Sj Bharathi, the poet of Tamil Nadu and Dr. Tagore. As the ennobling strains of music reached the further limits of the pandal, little noises and buzz that prevailed previously died down and silence reigned everywhere. Lady volunteers then sang songs of welcome.

Mr. Muthuranga MUDALIAR welcoming the delegates stressed on the need for preparing a constitution on unitary lines and emphasised the boycott of British goods as one of the weapons for meeting Anti-Indian attitude. The following is the full text of the speech delivered by him :—

### The Welcome Address.

Fellow Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen : On behalf of the Reception Committee, I extend to you a most cordial and warm welcome to this 42nd session of the Indian National Congress. We are meeting to-day under exceptional circumstances. We have reached a definite stage in the fight for Swaraj, and the main work before this Congress is to give a new direction to our activities in order to hasten the achievement of our ideal. I invite you to approach the problems before us with patriotic earnestness and courage, and to formulate a national programme which will not only command widespread acceptance but will take us onward in the march towards Swaraj.

#### Clear Cut Programme.

For some years past, the absence of a vitalising programme has disrupted and weakened the political activities of Indian Nationalists. The re-action, as non co-operation was slowly retracted, menaced our effective public life with almost certain extinction. But, thanks to the intervention of a divine Providence, we have to-day an energising war-cry which has reached, and is reaching ears hitherto closed to the call of nationalism. That war-cry is the Boycott of the Statutory Commission. With rare unanimity and with yet rarer enthusiasm, the whole Indian nation has with one voice determined to boycott the Statutory Commission on Indian Reforms. The British people must realise that all this feeling has not been generated in India merely by the insinuating propaganda of ultra-radical politicians. The great Moderate party, up-to-now a severely conservative influence in our politics, has on this matter made common cause with the Congress.

#### Boycott of Simon Commission.

On this occasion, I desire to draw your attention to a few of the more important reasons why we have thus almost unanimously decided to boycott the Commission. Firstly, under the principles evolved and the pledges given during the great war, we are entitled to decide what the form and extent of our self-government should be. In spite of the most solemn declarations and pledges given by the foremost British statesmen, India was insulted by the inclusion, in the Preamble to the Government of India Act of 1919, of terms which denied her right to self-determination. This was a gross betrayal and treachery which the united voice of India has been relentlessly condemning. To acquiesce in the re-assertion of that pernicious doctrine, now implied in the appointment of an All-British Commission, would be to abandon our self-respect. Secondly, the circumstances of the appointment of the Commission constitute a contemptuous rejection of the National Demand, passed by the Legislative Assembly in 1924 and reiterated in 1925. No reason has been vouchsafed to us why the Assembly

demand has been dealt with in this perfunctory manner. It is an insult to the elected representatives of our people, and consequently to the entire Indian Nation. Thirdly, even the moderate demand made by the Liberals for the inclusion of a substantial proportion of Indians in the Commission has been ignored. I desire it to be distinctly understood that we, the Congress men, will not be satisfied with anything less than a Constituent Convention for the determination of our future constitution, in which, representatives of Britain may also be permitted to deliberate, but only as equals, to safeguard any vested interests they may have in this country. The inclusion, in the Commission, of Indians chosen at random will not conciliate the Congress which stands for the principle of self-determination, logically worked out. Fourthly, the Commission should be ruthlessly boycotted, because it implies the application to India of doctrines which are contrary to the usages governing the relations between England and the Dominions. Shall we permit ourselves to be dealt with as inferiors in the Commonwealth of Nations forming the British Empire? An emphatic negative must be our unequivocal answer. Canada, Australia and South Africa were allowed the right of self-determination; and with one important exception, the Parliament no more tinkered with their drafts than merely dot the i's and cross the t's. Why should India alone be forced to a different course of constitutional development? It implies inferiority, and we must resist every such implication. And further, I desire to assert, on this occasion, that it is essential to the dignity and national self-respect of India, not to permit any extraneous authorities and influences, however potent, to dictate to her, what her government should be. To acquiesce in the unwarranted and dangerous presumption of the British Parliament would be a surrender of our self-respect, and would harm and demoralise our public life, not to mention the degradation in which it would involve us among the civilised nations of the world. Further, it is amply clear, that our non-participation in the Commission will not anyway jeopardise our political progress. The haughty Conservatives of the British Parliament, whose ranks are re-inforced by the no less jingoist section of labourites under Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, whose political masquerade as friends of India is at an end, have already prejudged our case, and there is nothing to be lost by our stern refusal to regularise their judgment by helping in the so-called inquiry. I have, therefore, no hesitation in adding my humble voice to the chorus of approval which has met the Boycott programme.

#### First Canon of Political Conduct in Swaraj.

I desire, at this stage, to make one or two observations on the misgivings felt by honest friends of India as to our attitude towards certain domestic questions, peculiarly the legacy of British Rule in India. I assure the minorities and the special interests who have been persistently misled by interested persons, that in a free and a democratic India, their interests would be safer than now. India has, through history, been the asylum of the oppressed and the persecuted, and it is part of our national character to treat minorities hospitably and even charitably. Protection to minorities will be the first canon of political conduct in Swaraj India. Nextly, we must repudiate the suggestion that Britain should ever be the peace-maker in India, holding its diverse interests and peoples in justice to each other, but in subjection to herself. We must proclaim our right and our capacity to settle equitably and honourably, all these delicate questions. Thus there is no argument for co-operation with the Statutory Commission except the argument of fear, of toadyism and of atrophied political sense.

#### Negative Programme.

The boycott of the Commission is a negative programme which has happily brought together most of the parties in the country. Advantage must be taken of this beneficent atmosphere to develop methods and policies which will be acceptable to the generality of our countrymen. To start with, the need is imperative to educate public opinion on an agreed draft of Swaraj Constitution, embodying the aspirations and the hopes of the Indian nation. Such a programme will clarify the issues before the country and will enable all the parties to concentrate their energies in devising effective sanctions, with which we can

enforce our demand for Swaraj, and to organise our forces and carry on such a propaganda that the urge for Swaraj would be felt in the heart of every Indian so powerfully, that the response of a united and concentrated effort would finally win us our freedom.

#### Swaraj Scheme.

Fellow Delegates, I shall now refer to a few features which, I think, should characterise any scheme of Swaraj for India. Firstly, we ought to make it known that if Parliament continues in its present insolent mood, we must definitely start on an intensive propaganda for the severance of India from the Empire. Whenever the time may come for the effective assertion of Indian Nationalism, Indian aspiration will then be towards free nationhood, untrammelled even by the nominal suzerainty of the King of England. It behoves English statesmanship to take careful note of this fact. Let them not drive us to despair. As yet, the substantial opinion in the country favours the ideal of freedom within the Empire. But this persistent step-motherly treatment will only compel us to decide against any further participation in a caste-ridden Empire. Parliament should recognise, and at once, that in India as well as in Ireland, all authority should be derived from the people and not from Whitehall. In the absence of any assurance in this behalf, we must abandon any further thought of framing our constitution as a constituent partner of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

#### Declaration of Rights.

Nextly, I desire to emphasise the paramount need of an exhaustive Declaration of Rights which will form part of our constitution. There should be unmistakable guarantees of the Rights of Citizens to equal and just treatment and to freedom from oppression by the limbs of the law. There ought to be the fullest political equality of all classes and without distinction of religion or race. The Indian democracy should afford equal opportunities to all its citizens for self-development and self-expression. Respect for individual acts and opinions, not detrimental to public order or morality, ought to be asserted and guaranteed in the fundamental law. Educational facilities, free and compulsory at least till the elementary standard, and free, up to the secondary, ought to be provided by appropriate clauses, in the constitution. Further, it is essential to the character of religious neutrality of the Indian Government that there should be no state religion in this country. In this connection, I desire to allude to the views expressed by a prominent Indian statesman that there is no need for a Declaration of Rights in India, as we are imbued with British traditions of justice which contain guarantees, in ordinary law, of the Rights of Citizens. The Rule of Law may be a fact in England, but in India it is unknown. Ireland, where too the British have created traditions of justice and the Rule of Law, has most judiciously incorporated such a Declaration in her Constitution. I therefore respectfully differ and maintain that we should rather follow the precedent of Ireland, who suffered equally with us under British Rule.

#### Unitary Government.

Next, it is my humble opinion that the Government we should organise for India under Swaraj should be on the unitary basis. Federal Government, however suitable to the conditions of other countries, will be peculiarly inappropriate to India with its revived sense of solidarity. It will also disrupt the synthesising forces of nationalism and present the sad picture of a divided India. If there is local sentiment and local aspiration, we can well provide for them by a careful process of decentralisation. Administrative units organised on a linguistic basis, with adequate provisions for the needs of localities, will amply answer the requirements of local patriotism. At the same time, a strong Central Government will keep nationalism in-tact and elevate India among the nations of the world.

#### Question of Franchise.

I would, then, invite your attention to the all-important question of franchise. We have to devise principles of representation which would accord well

with the needs of democracy. May I, in this connection, draw your attention to the conclusions of the All-India Congress Committee in its recent meeting at Calcutta? These conclusions dispose of the long-standing inter-communal problem, admirably and satisfactorily. I commend the resolutions to your acceptance. Further, although the exclusive representation of any special interests would not be in strict consonance with the democratic theory, considering the peculiar conditions in India, I would advocate that the Depressed Classes alone may be given special representation, if only for a time. I do not sympathise with similar demands made on behalf of Anglo-Indians and Corporations like the Universities and the Chambers of Commerce. Their interests, if they have any, apart from those of the people, will, I conceive, be sufficiently safeguarded by an assembly composed of members chosen in general constituencies.

I would also respectfully offer a suggestion as to the method we should adopt to arrive at agreement regarding any such constitution. The Indian National Congress should take early steps to convene a convention of representatives of all parties and interests, which should decide on a constitution for India. Any scheme agreed to by such a convention, as ratified by a special session of the Congress would be the demand of united India. To enforce the demand for the constitution, we have to devise adequate sanctions.

Congress should be the Arbiter of Disputes.

The first step we have to take is to unite all the parties with a view to offering struggle for Swaraj. A campaign of communal co-operation and harmony must be started methodically and pursued with vigour by the Congress. Our opponents make political capital of the absence of amity among the leading communities and of the state of the Depressed Classes. We must remove the cause, more in our own interests than in answer to the English indictment. The efforts made and the results arrived at so far, have been very encouraging. Bombay and the Calcutta decisions of the All-India Congress Committee, inspired by the great and self-less leader, Mr. S. Srinivasa Ayengar, are already finding sympathetic acceptance all over the country. This ameliorative work ought to be pushed on. Similarly, well-considered attempts should be made to settle the unfortunate Brahmin and Non-Brahmin misunderstandings, the Buddhist agitation in Gaya and the sectional differences among the Sikhs. I have hopes that these problems, which stand in the way of national work, will soon be solved in a statesmanly spirit and in view of the larger interests at stake. The just and equitable settlement of these questions will enhance the prestige of the Congress and by common consent, the Congress will attain to the position of a respected arbiter of inter-communal misunderstanding.

Higher Ideals.

Nextly, there is the most urgent need for the propagation of higher economic ideals in the country. The workers of the Congress should carry to the ryots, not only a political but also an economic message. The cultivator should be familiarised with the modern methods of agriculture and with the immense usefulness of the Co-operative movement. Vast tracts of land may be cultivated, and the wealth of the country enormously increased if only our ryots will understand and use the modern scientific methods of agriculture. Again, principles of sanitation ought to be a prominent subject of propaganda of every Congress worker. In particular, we must make strenuous endeavours to minimise the Drink evil, as its total extinction without state-aid is impossible. Educated and wealthy citizens, who have any patriotism, should forthwith engage their talents and their wealth in the noble work of advancing India's industrial development. Besides augmenting the wealth of the country, it would solve the present menacing evil, that of wide-spread unemployment. The Congress must appoint Board for tackling the economic question and for directing the activities of Congress workers in this matter.

Boycott of Foreign Goods.

While thus the Congress will endeavour to improve the economic life of our country by the promotion of industrial and agricultural activity, there is also

a negative aspect to this work. For some years we are familiar with the policy of boycotting British and foreign goods. Under the present circumstances, I have no doubt that the Congress will come to the unanimous decision that as a political sanction behind our demand for Swaraj, we shall strictly and ruthlessly boycott all British goods. But the economic interests of India require that we should proceed a step further. We should boycott all foreign goods, which would anywise compete with Indian manufactures. India gains nothing economically by purchasing continental and American substitutes, sometimes inferior to British goods. The Congress should, as early as possible, appoint an expert Committee which will organise this boycott, and make it thoroughly effective; so that the emphatic refusal to take any article of British manufacture will serve our political purpose, and the exclusion, as far as possible, of all foreign goods, will serve our economic purpose.

#### Khaddar Movement.

I have reserved Khaddar for special mention. Thanks to the untiring efforts of Mahatmaji and his noble band of workers, the movement is imperceptibly and steadily expanding. Well-wishers of our country would desire most heartily for its further expansion and growth. The faith of the country in Mahatmaji's favourite programme is being every day increased, as is evidenced by the immense and steady strides the movement is taking. I wish to make one suggestion in this connection. The Spinners' Association have built up a splendid organisation. I appeal to them to combine political works, especially propagandist, with the beneficent activities they are now pursuing. Secondly, I suggest that they should not confine themselves only to Khaddar, but should include among their activities, the promotion of the sale of other purely indigenous articles in general demand. This would greatly help the indigenous industries as well as improve the finance of the Spinners' Association. I earnestly appeal to Mahatmaji to consider this suggestion.

#### Labour Organisation.

The organisation of labour is another vital matter. The Congress must stand fearlessly and whole-heartedly by the labouring population, industrial and agricultural. The Congress should co-operate with the All-India Trade Union Congress and help it to secure human conditions for Indian labour. By enlisting their active assistance, the cause of Swaraj could be tremendously advanced.

#### Congress Organisation.

Fellow Delegates, I would now invite your attention to the Congress organisation in the country. I must at once confess that we do not have to-day, that efficient and thorough organisation, which is necessary to carry forward the programme of a great body such as the Congress. We must at once set ourselves to the laborious task of spreading the organisation so as to reach the farthest parts of our country, so that our message may evoke universal response. Paid workers, carefully trained for political and economic propaganda, and capable of commanding respect and prestige in the localities in which they work should be sent everywhere and the people kept in live contact with the progress of our fight for Swaraj. So high must be the character that our propagandists possess with the people, that they would be always looked upon as earnest servants of the Country, capable of giving intelligent guidance on every matter, and at the same time, sound exponents of politics and economics.

#### Congress Slogan.

Thus, the Constitution as a political slogan and the boycott of British and foreign goods as an economic war-cry, the Congress should launch forth on a campaign of unparalleled propaganda and agitation for Swaraj. With a country re-awakened to a sense of its rights, re-united and re-organised, it would be easy to wrest freedom from unwilling hands.

#### Gauhati Programme.

May I now make a passing reference to a question, which I believe, occupies our attention rather disproportionately to its importance? With my short

experience as a member of the Madras Legislative Council, I have come to certain conclusions, which I feel it to be my duty to express on this occasion. Without dilating upon the reasons which forced me to those conclusions, I shall proceed to state them. The Gauhati programme has been found to be unworkable. The programme lacked precision, and I am sorry to have to say it, it is definitely tending to demoralise the Congress party in the Councils. I re-affirm my faith in Mahatmaji's original policy of absolute boycott of all these Councils. For one thing we may all concentrate on work outside in the Country which suffers enormously owing to the time taken up in attending to Council work. But, somehow, Mahatmaji's policy is to-day not in public favour. If we must contest Council Elections, what we should do after entering the Councils, is the only question. I entirely agree with Mr. Srinivasa Ayyengar that the elected Members should abstain from attending the Councils except for retaining their seats. Whatever be the short-comings of this programme, it seems to me to be the least objectionable. But if the opinion in this Congress is against Mahatmaji's suggestion and Mr. Srinivasa Ayyengar's, I must ask for a logical and workable programme. No alternative occurs to me except the removal of the Gauhati ban, so that Congressmen may have freedom to so manage their affairs in the Councils as to obtain the maximum advantage to their cause. Congressmen should think many times before taking this step. It means the adoption of the policy which has been very clumsily described as Responsive Co-operation. It means the final and professed abandonment of the original policy of non-co-operation. It is our duty carefully to consider whether such a serious step is warranted by the necessities of the present situation. Ought we to forswear even this remnant of a great policy; and if so in favour of which alternative? While, on the one hand we are proclaiming a new boycott, that of the Statutory Commission, shall we end by raising another to which we gave loyal adherence for a number of years? I invite the congressmen to ponder over to consequences of this step. I appeal to you to preserve the spirit of 1920; and not to throw it up merely because your statesmanship cannot devise appropriate media for carrying it out. Remember the detenus of Bengal; remember the tone of Lord Birkenhead's speech before you think of co-operation. For, it is clear to my mind, that the alternative to non co-operation is co-operation; the hybrid has produced anarchy. With great humility, I venture to suggest that the only policy which will meet the present delicate situation is the one which permits us to enter the Councils but forbids us to sit there.

Fellow-Delegates, it is now my pleasant duty to congratulate you on the excellence of your choice of President. No more appropriate selection could have been made. Throughout next year, the country would be engaged in a keen fight for Swaraj, which would require the hearty co-operation of all communities for its successful termination. Dr. Ansari is a symbol of such co-operation. With the unique advantage of a long experience of public affairs in India, and of the unquestioning confidence of every section of Indian people, he will be in a position to lead us to our goal to Swaraj.

After Mr. Mudaliar had read his address he walked up to the dais and garlanded Dr. M. A. Ansari amidst thundering cheers. Mr. Rangaaswamy Iyengar invested him with the insignia of presidentship. Dr. Ansari then mounted the rostrum. Another round of cheers greeted him and he acknowledged it with smiles and namaskarams. He then read his presidential address. His references to Mahatma Gandhi and his repetition of Mahatma's words "Swaraj within the Empire if possible and without if necessary" evoked a prolonged applause. The following is the full text of the speech delivered by him:

### The Presidential Address.

"I find it difficult to put into words my deep sense of gratitude at the confidence you have placed in me by calling upon me to preside over the

deliberations of the Indian National Congress, at this critical juncture in the history of our struggle for freedom. This meeting of the Congress at Madras, takes me back to the day—more than a quarter of a century ago—when as an under-graduate, full of hope and enthusiasm, I had my first glimpse of our great national gathering. Little did I dream then that in that very city it would fall to my lot to occupy the chair which has been filled in the past by some of the greatest sons of India. Our national movement has increased in force and volume since those days. The political awakening of the people has become widespread, the intensity of the struggle has become more severe and, with the march of time, the problems we are called upon to solve have grown more and more complex. The task of your President has, in consequence, become delicate and difficult. It was only the hope that I could count upon your indulgence towards my shortcomings and your generous support in the discharge of my duties that encouraged me to undertake this heavy responsibility.

"The inter-dependence of political problems in different countries and the dangers arising out of the economic and political bondage of India to the peaceful progress of humanity at large, specially to the interests of the workers in Great Britain, are being gradually realised and while Imperialist Capitalist interests are carrying on a campaign of misrepresentation and vilification against India in order to justify and perpetuate its exploitation and subservience, the presence, among us to-day, of the distinguished fraternal delegates from across the seas, gives hope that fellow-victims of Imperialism and Capitalism in other parts of the world have begun to appreciate the necessity of closer co-operation and joint action to fight the common enemy. I offer these friends a sincere and cordial welcome on behalf of the Indian National Congress and the people of India.

"A matter of greater pleasure and satisfaction to me is that my appeal for a re-united Congress has met with such a generous response. I rejoice to find among us once more veterans and tried champions whose names are inseparably associated with India's fight for freedom. I cordially welcome all these comrades and fellow-workers back to the fold of the Congress and hope and pray that, as in the past so in the future, the country will derive the fullest benefit from their services.

#### India and Imperialism.

"In the statement I published some time back I had touched upon the salient features of the existing political situation and briefly expressed my own views regarding the most effective method of dealing with it. I do not, therefore, propose to address you at great length to-day. But even in a brief survey we must take into account every issue that has a direct bearing on the furtherance of our political programme. All schools of political thought in India are agreed that the goal of our activities is a free and self-governing India, offering equal opportunities to all and recognising and guaranteeing the just and legitimate rights of all sections and classes, at peace within herself and friendly with the rest of the world. Indians do not claim anything more or less than that they shall occupy the same position and enjoy the same rights in their country as free people do in their own. If this can be achieved within the Empire they have no desire to break away from it but if the Imperial connection stands in the way of our reaching the goal we should not hesitate to sever the connection.



Our motto, in the words of Mahatma Gandhi, should be "within the Empire if possible, without if necessary."

"I do not minimise the difficulties in our path. They are many but none so formidable as the one arising out of the aggressiveness of Imperialism and the greed of High Finance, the two most fruitful sources of trouble and misery in the world to-day. Empires are carved and nations are deprived of their liberties to satisfy the Imperialist ambition and to monopolise resources in raw materials to feed the factories in Europe and to secure exclusive markets for their output.

"Politicians and statesmen wax eloquent over the *mission civilisatrice* and the white man's burden, but none has exposed the hollowness of these professions better than Cecil Rhodes, the great pioneer of Imperialism in South Africa when he said, "Pure philanthropy is very well in its way but philanthropy plus five per cent. is a good deal better." Joseph Chamberlain, that High Priest of Imperialism, was more outspoken. "The Empire" he said, "is commerce." and India, he was frank enough to add, was "by far the greatest and the most valuable of all the customers we have or ever shall have." The history of this philanthropic burglary on the part of Europe is written in blood and suffering from Congo to Canton. The steel-frame theory of Government, the arrogant claims to trusteeship of dumb millions and the newly-invented illusion to cloak the pre-war Concert of Europe, known as the League of Nations, are but different manifestations of the same spirit. So long as these dangerous doctrines are pursued the sources of human misery shall endure. India holds in her hands the remedy for this universal misfortune, for she is the key-stone of the arch of Imperialism. Once India is free the whole edifice will collapse. The best guarantee for the freedom of Asia and the peace of the world, is a free and self-governing India.

#### Congress Policies.

"The problem then is how to free India. For over a generation the leaders of public opinion in the country advocated and practised a policy of complete Co-operation with the Government. That policy was doomed to failure from its very inception. Co-operation is possible between groups with common ideals. Where objects pursued are diametrically opposed there can be no co-operation. Co-operation in such circumstances can only mean surrender of the most cherished ideals on the part of the weak to the wishes and desires of the strong. The difference between the ideals of the two nations is nowhere brought out more vividly or in greater relief than in the report of the late Mr. Montagu, a Liberal Secretary of State for India, noted for his pro-Indian sympathies. The report, which forms the basis of the Government of India Act of 1919, while promising progressive realisation of responsible government and extending lavish hopes for the future, clearly lays down: "It seems to us axiomatic that there cannot be a completely representative and responsible Government of India on an equal footing with the other self-governing units of the British Commonwealth until the component States whose people it represents and to whom it is responsible, or at least the great majority of them, have themselves reached the stage of full responsible government. Nor even then can we say that the form or the degree or responsibility which will be reached in India will exactly correspond to that attained by the Dominions. The final form

of India's constitutions must be evolved out of the conditions of India, and must be materially affected by the need for securing imperial responsibilities."

"If, however, our rules forsake their divine mission of civilising "the inferior races" and cease to act the executors of the decrees of Providence, if they realise that a friendly and free India will be a better customer than a sullen and hostile dependency kept under political and economic bondage, in short, if they recognise that there are civilisations and cultures equally good, if not better than their own, if they cease to think in terms of the ruler and the ruled and are prepared to meet us on terms of equality, it will then be time for us to revise our views on co-operation.

"An alternative policy advocated, on the set-back received by the Non-co-operation Movement, was to capture the Councils and, by creating constitutional deadlocks, force the Government to yield to the wishes of the people. The advocates of this policy, however, failed to give its proper weight to the fact that the limitations imposed by the Government of India Act of 1919, rendered all such opposition ineffective and the creation of constitutional deadlocks a practical impossibility. They, no less than the advocates of the policy of Co-operation, should have realised that an ultra-constitutional issue could not be fought on a strictly constitutional plane. In a trial of strength there can be no hope of success if your opponent is also the referee. Practical experience has demonstrated the futility of such a policy even in Provinces where the believers in this method commanded a majority. They undoubtedly succeeded in exposing the hollowness of the so-called Reforms and by preventing the Government from packing legislatures with 'safe' persons, they made it impossible for the rulers to present their autocratic and high-handed actions as representing the declared will of the people expressed through its chosen representatives. But all this has not materially advanced our cause, nor has it brought us any nearer our goal, while the price paid for it is too dear. It has diverted the energies of some of our ablest men from problems of real national importance. The Council Programme, adopted at a time of depression, was professedly in the nature of an experiment. We gave it a trial and if it has not fulfilled our expectations there is no reason to feel discouraged or disappointed. Let us revise our policy in the light of our past experience.

"There are no two opinions regarding our goal. We all desire to see India free and self-governing. For the achievement of our object we are not wedded to any particular policy, nor do we consider any programme sacrosanct or binding for ever. We have to judge a policy or a programme by its suitability to our peculiar social and political conditions by its practicability and by the results which it is likely to give within a measurable period of time. We have now before us the results of the three experiments made by the Congress during the last forty years. We gave an unbroken period of thirty-five years to Co-operation, about a year and a half to Non-co-operation and four years to the policy of Obstruction within the Councils and Constitutional Deadlocks. We can, at this stage, appraise the real value of each programme and judge the comparative merits and demerits of each. Co-operation has led us nowhere. Obstruction within the Councils has not given us any better results. Non-co-operation certainly did not achieve all that was expected of it but it was through our own weakness and inability to rise to the high level demanded by it and not through any inherent defect of that policy. Non-co-operation did not fail us, we failed Non-co-

operation. We did receive an unquestionable and a serious set-back in the first encounter. I also admit that in the present atmosphere of mutual suspicion and hatred created by deplorable communal quarrels and with the whole country divided into hostile political camps and factionous groups, there is no prospect of an immediate resumption of Non-co-operation. The spirit of Non-co-operation, however, has come to stay as a potent force in Indian politics and as I have said elsewhere, "I feel as certain as ever that apart from very extraordinary and unexpected occurrences we shall win back our freedom only by self-discipline, self organisation and self-help and through a movement in which we would be obliged to resort to direct action in some shape or form. I firmly believe that India is only recuperating from the moral and material effects of a disastrous war and would soon emerge once more resuscitated and rejuvenated to attain what it is destined to attain."

"How best then can we help this process of resuscitation and rejuvenation and prepare ourselves for the next encounter? It is my unshakable belief that this cannot be done unless we have established Unity in the Country, Unity in the Congress and Unity in the Councils, if people must still make use of them. Differences of opinion are inevitable. They have existed and will continue to exist. What we have to learn is the stage at which these differences, if persisted in, become injurious to the general interest of the country. We must learn to differentiate between personal prestige and public weal and to sacrifice individual gain to the collective good.

#### Unity in the Country.

"There is no feature of the Indian political situation more disquieting than the shameful quarrels between Hindus and Mussalmans. No language can be too strong to condemn the murderous assaults and callous destruction of life and property in riotings which occur with such painful frequency. Hardly a day passes when we do not hear of some violent outburst of communal fury in one part of the country or the other, leaving its legacy of bitterness and hatred threatening to reduce the country to one vast camp of warring communal factions bent on destroying each other. It is due to this that the Congress itself has lost in popularity. It is being relegated in many Provinces to a secondary position, and preference is being given to communal organisations, specially those which are militant. This state of affairs must not be allowed to continue any longer. The problem of Hindu-Muslim differences must be solved once and for all and there is no organisation more competent and better fitted to put an end to it than the Indian National Congress.

"While attempting to solve the Hindu-Muslim question we should not, however, mistake the symptom for the disease. The political and religious differences which are straining the relations between the two communities are but outward manifestations of a deeper conflict, not peculiar to India or unknown to history. It is essentially a problem of two different cultures, each with its own out-look on life, coming in close contact with one another. The best remedy lies in a recognition of the right of each culture to exist, in a development of a spirit of tolerance and respect and in the encouragement and cultivation of cultural affinity by the establishment of national institutions where young people of both the communities will come into touch with each other and get opportunities to study and understand the

ideals underlying the civilisations of both. The educated Indian is forced by circumstances to study European culture but knows next to nothing about the culture of his fellow-countryman living next door. It is time this dangerous isolation and colossal ignorance were ended. With greater knowledge of each other's deep-rooted sentiments and sympathy for each other's ideals, questions of separate representation, cow-slaughter and music before mosques will become matters of the past, of interest only to research scholars of Indian History.

"In the meantime, we cannot afford to minimise or neglect the problem which faces us to-day. There are certain fundamental facts which it will be well for Hindus and Mussalmans to remember. They should not forget that they are Indians destined to live in India and die in India. Providence has bound their fates together indissolubly. If there be any Hindu brother of mine who imagines that he can get rid of seventy millions of his Muslim fellow-countrymen he is labouring under a great delusion and the sooner he is disillusioned the better for him and the country. Similarly, if any Muslim brother of mine is dreaming of lording it over two hundred and fifty millions of his Hindu countrymen he is living in a fool's paradise and the sooner he opens his eyes the better for the Muslim community and India. The Swaraj we are striving for will be neither Hindu Raj nor Muslim Raj. It will be a Joint Raj protecting the just and legitimate rights and privileges of all. Perpetual warfare cannot be the normal state of human society. The worker in the communal cause apparently wishes to improve the economic, political and educational position of his community. With this I have no quarrel. But for any solid and lasting good to be done either to a group or to a nation, tranquillity and peace are essential conditions. Violent communal outbursts may benefit any other party, they certainly cannot benefit the country nor do they serve even exclusive communal interests. Instead of resorting to these barbarous methods of settling differences, I would appeal to my countrymen to make use of the great national tribunal, the custodian of the rights and privileges of all sections and communities inhabiting this country, the Indian National Congress, for the protection of their rights and the redress of their grievances.

"A subject people trying to shake off foreign domination cannot afford to carry on an internecine struggle. We cannot in one breath talk of freedom and such communalism, for they are the very antithesis of each other. It would be difficult for an outside observer to believe in the genuineness of our demand when he observes the fratricidal war we are waging to-day. Our very patriotism begins to appear a sham. In our efforts to gain a little advantage here and a little advantage there over our rivals, we are unconsciously playing into the hands of the common adversary whose position is being strengthened every day. Can we not all with one joint effort and determination get rid of this degrading mentality? Self-respect, even self-interest, requires us to enlarge our vision and look beyond momentary and sectional advantage to the lasting national gain.

#### Hindu-Muslim Conflict.

"The causes of communal antagonism exercising the minds of the leaders of the two communities as brought out at the various Unity Conferences crystallise themselves into two distinct groups—Political and Religious.

"It will serve no useful purpose to enter into a description of how the Mussalmans, fearing that the sense of political responsibility of the majority

was not sufficiently advanced to trust it with the protection of their rights, demanded separate representation and separate electorates. It is a matter of past history and every one in this assembly is fully aware of it. It is enough for our present purpose to state that, realising the disastrous consequences recent developments were likely to lead to, the Indian National Congress, at its annual session last year at Gauhati, called upon the All-India Congress Committee to devise measures for a settlement of the trouble in these terms :—

[" This Congress calls upon the Working Committee to take immediate steps in consultation with the Hindu and Musalman leaders to devise measures for the removal of the present deplorable disturbances between Hindus and Musalmans and submit a report to the All-India Congress Committee, not later than the 31st March, 1927. This Congress authorises the All-India Congress Committee to issue the necessary instructions in that behalf to all Congressmen in the country and take such other steps as it may deem fit after consideration of the said report." The President got into touch with the leaders of public opinion in both the communities. He travelled extensively all over the country to mobilise the good sense and active co-operation of both communities and, finally, arranged a series of conversations at Delhi. It is a great tribute to the sincerity, zeal and indefatigable energy of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, that a formula for settlement of outstanding political differences was at last discovered. I would be lacking in my duty if I did not place on record the appreciation of the Indian National Congress of the spirit of patriotism and statesmanship displayed by the Muslim leaders who rose above prejudice, suspicion and narrow communal outlook and boldly came forward with the proposals which presage a new orientation of Muslim policy in India. The Working Committee, at a meeting held on the 15th May, " considered the proposals made by representative Muslim leaders who met in Delhi on the 20th March last, as well as the opinion of the Hindu Maha Sabha and other Hindu organisations and the opinions of both communities", and submitted its report to the All-India Congress Committee, on the 15th May, 1927. The resolution, embodying the recommendations of the Working Committee, passed by the All-India Congress Committee, with the unanimous support of all the members present, including some of the foremost leaders of the Hindu Maha Sabha, speaks volumes for the political sagacity of the Committee and was a personal triumph for the President and his great powers of persuasion.

" The All-India Congress Committee approves and adopts the report of the Working Committee on the Hindu-Muslim question and the recommendations contained therein and calls upon all Congress organisations to take necessary steps to have the following recommendations carried out :—

1. That in any future scheme of constitution, so far as representation in the various legislatures is concerned, joint electorates in all the provinces and in the Central Legislature be constituted.

2. That, with a view to give full assurances to the two great communities that their legitimate interests will be safeguarded in the Legislatures for the present, and if desired, such representation of the communities should be secured by the reservation of seats in joint electorates on the basis of population in every province and in the Central Legislature :

Provided that reciprocal concessions in favour of minorities including the Sikhs in the Punjab may be made by mutual agreement so as to give

them representation in excess of the proportion of the number of seats to which they would be entitled on the population basis in any province or provinces, and the proportions so agreed upon for the provinces shall be maintained in the representation of the two communities in the Central Legislature from the provinces.

3. (a) That the proposal made by the Muslim leaders that reforms should be introduced in the N. W. F. Province and British Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces is, in the opinion of the Committee, a fair and reasonable one, and should be given effect to, care being taken that simultaneously with other measures of administrative reform an adequate system of judicial administration shall be introduced in the said provinces.

2. (b) (i) That with regard to the proposal that Sind should be constituted into a separate province, this Committee is of opinion that the time has come for the redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis—a principle that has been adopted by the constitution of the Congress.

(ii) The Committee is also of opinion that such readjustment of provinces be immediately taken in hand and that any province which demands such reconstitution on a linguistic basis be dealt with accordingly.

(iii) The Committee is further of opinion that a beginning may be made by constituting Andhra, Sind and Karnatak into separate provinces.

4. That, in the future Constitution, liberty of conscience shall be guaranteed and no legislature, central or provincial, shall have power to make any laws interfering with liberty of conscience.

"Liberty of Conscience" means liberty of belief and worship, freedom of religious observances and association and freedom to carry on religious education and propaganda with due regard to the feelings of others and without interfering with similar rights of others.

5. That no Bill, Resolution, Motion or Amendment regarding inter-communal matters shall be moved, discussed or passed in any legislature, Central or Provincial, if a three-fourths majority of the members of either community affected thereby in that legislature oppose the introduction, discussion or passing of such Bill, Resolution, Motion or Amendment.

"Inter-communal matters" means matters agreed upon as such by a Joint Standing Committee of both communities, of the Hindu and Muslim members of the legislatures concerned, appointed at the commencement of every session of the legislature."] ]

"The resolution is a great advance on the Lucknow Pact of 1919, which has so far regulated Hindu-Muslim relations. Its terms are so clear that there is no need of any further comment from me. I should, however, like to emphasise the importance of the decision regarding joint electorates. The one great cause of friction so far has been separate electorates. If the success of a candidate at elections depends entirely on the votes of his co-religionists the tendency to exaggerate and accentuate points of communal friction and division in order to catch votes is inevitable. The resolution, while making the fullest possible allowance for the fear of minorities regarding adequate protection, by reservation of seats, presents fresh opportunities for the development of a spirit of friendliness and mutual confidence, the best augury for a United India.

"The acceptance of the principle of representation on the basis of population puts our electoral system on a just and equitable basis. It puts an

end, on the one hand, to the dissatisfaction felt at the preferential treatment accorded to minorities and, on the other, removes the grievance of the majorities in Bengal and the Punjab which were reduced to minorities. At the same time, the special interests of minorities have been safe-guarded by the provision that if a three-fourths majority of their representatives opposes any measure affecting their interests it shall not be even discussed or moved.

"The right of the Indian National Congress to settle communal differences has been challenged in certain quarters. It has been contended that the Congress has no jurisdiction in inter-communal matters, whether political or religious. I hold that no communal organisation or organisations put together, can supercede the Congress or enjoy even a parallel jurisdiction. The Indian National Congress is not meant for registering the decrees issued by the different communal organisations. It is primarily and essentially the only organisation that can deal with such matters and hold the balance even between community and community. If leaders of communal groups can come to a just and amicable agreement on any questions agitating the minds of their respective communities the Congress would unhesitatingly welcome it. But if they fail to arrive at an agreement the Congress, as the paramount national organisation, must step in and perform its obvious duty of adjusting communal relations and preserving communal peace and harmony undeterred by petulant threats and challenges from angry and disgruntled communalists.

#### Communal Differences.

"So far as political differences are concerned the Congress adopted a satisfactory formula for their solution at Bombay. But religious and social points of difference still remained to be settled and the President gave the leaders of the two communities an opportunity at Simla, to come to an agreement on them. When the protracted negotiations ended in a fiasco the President took advantage of the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee to be held at Calcutta and issued invitations to prominent Hindu and Muslim leaders to give the Committee the benefit of their advice and help him and the Committee to complete the good work begun at Bombay. The result of these efforts is summed up in the two resolutions passed at the Unity Conference and adopted by the All-India Congress Committee :—

[1. Conversion.—"The All-India Congress Committee resolves that every individual or group is at liberty to convert or reconvert another by argument or persuasion but no individual or group shall attempt to do so, or prevent its being done, by force, fraud or other unfair means such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under eighteen years of age should not be converted unless it be along with their parents or guardians. If any person under eighteen years of age is found stranded without his parents or guardian by persons of another faith, he should be promptly handed over to persons of his own faith. There must be no secrecy as to the person, place, time or manner about any conversion or reconversion, nor should there be any demonstration or jubilation in support of any conversion or reconversion.

"Whenever any complaint is made in respect of any conversion or reconversion, that it was effected in secrecy or by force, fraud or other unfair means, or whenever any person under eighteen years of age is converted, the matter shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators who shall be

appointed by the Working Committee either by name or under general regulations."

2. Cow and Music.—"The All-India Congress Committee, while approving of the following resolution on the Cow and Music question as a fair settlement of opposite demands and points-of-view, authorises members of the Congress to carry on propaganda among Hindus and Muslims along the lines indicated in the resolution and calls upon the Working Committee to appoint a Sub-Committee for the purpose of carrying on such propaganda:

And further resolves that the resolution do come up for confirmation at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and the Congress to be held in Madras:—

'Whereas no community in India should impose or seek to impose its religious obligations or religious views upon any other community but the free profession and practice of religion should, subject to public order and morality, be guaranteed to every community and person.

Hindus are at liberty to take processions and play music before any mosque at any time for religious or other purposes but there should be no stoppage of the processions nor special demonstration in front of a mosque nor shall the songs or music sung or played in front of a mosque be such as is calculated to cause annoyance or special disturbance to the worshippers in the mosque.

Muslims are at liberty to sacrifice cows or, subject to existing municipal laws regulating the slaughter of animals for purposes of food, to slaughter cows, in any town or village, in any place not being a thoroughfare nor one in the vicinity of a temple or a "mandir" nor one exposed to the gaze of Hindus.

Cows should not be led in procession or in demonstration for sacrifice or slaughter.

Having regard to the deep-rooted sentiment of the Hindu community in the matter of cow-killing, the Muslim community is earnestly appealed to, so conduct the cow sacrifice or slaughter as not to cause annoyance to the Hindus of the town or village concerned.

Whenever a complaint is made that any of the provisions of this resolution have been contravened, it shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators appointed by the Working Committee by name or under general regulations and their decision shall be final."

Efforts at composing communal differences in the past have been handicapped by attempts on the part of one community to impose restrictions on the enjoyment of its rights by the other. The result was that instead of removing mistrust and suspicion and creating a respect of each other's religious sentiments the solution generally led to a further intensification of the strife. The resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee are based on the recognition of complete freedom of each community to enjoy its rights to minimum restrictions necessary for peaceful corporate social life. The fear of any curtailment of their rights having been once removed, an appeal to the higher sentiments of the two communities, to their spirit of toleration and forbearance, is bound to have greater chance of success. It is not impossible that each community may even voluntarily forego a portion of the enjoyment of its rights out of regard for the sentiments and feelings of the other.



"The Congress has given a definite lead. It has prescribed a potent remedy to eradicate the communal canker which has been eating into the very vitals of our body politic. It is now for us Congressmen to carry on a vigorous propaganda to explain and popularise these resolution and to bring them home to the Hindu and Muslim public all over the country. I earnestly appeal to every well-wisher of India, irrespective of his political creed, to lend a helping hand to the Congress in this noble cause. Specially do I appeal to the Press of the country to realise its great responsibility in the matter. There is no other agency which plays such an important part in the moulding of public opinion and the regulation of inter-communal relations. It is the powerful instrument for good or for evil and I regret to say that throughout this unhappy communal crisis, our Press, especially the vernacular Press, has not exercised its influence for the good. With very few noble exceptions it has actually fanned the flames of conflict and lamentably failed in the discharge of its duties. I cannot have any complaint against the Anglo-Indian news-papers. They naturally serve the interests that maintain them. But is it too much to expect from our own journals and journalists that they will subordinate their selfish considerations to the supreme interest of common national good and ally themselves with forces working for the restoration of concord and amity? The conduct of News-Agencies in the country has not been altogether satisfactory either. Let us hope that they too will contribute their share to the restoration and maintenance of unity in the country. Let us all realise that it is a matter of life and death for us and on the success of our efforts to achieve unity in the country depends the whole future of India.

"If I have discussed at length the question of Hindu-Muslim differences it is because like the ubiquitous microbe it has infected every sphere of our national activity. I am conscious that the question of Hindu-Muslim relations is only a part of the broader problem of the rights of minorities and backward classes. The Sikhs in the North and the non-Brahmins in the South and the so-called Depressed Classes all over India, equally deserve our close attention. I do not propose to deal at length with the Sikhs or the non-Brahmins but I cannot resist the temptation of putting in a plea on behalf of the millions of untouchability, although a problem essentially for our Hindu brothers to solve, must still be a matter of the deepest concern to every Indian inasmuch as the presence of such a large section of our fellow-countrymen suffering under grievous social and political disabilities cannot but retard our efforts for the emancipation of our country.

#### Unity in the Congress.

"Next in importance to the re-establishment of communal harmony is the question of the reorganisation of the Congress on a wider basis. The setback we received in the Non-co-operation movement told heavily on the Congress. The keen enthusiasm of the palmy days of 1920 and 1921, when every city and every village had a Congress Committee of its own, began to cool down and, with the outbreak of communal dissensions, gave place to apathy and in cases, fortunately rare, to open hostility to the Congress. The communal question having been settled on the lines of the Bombay and Calcutta resolutions measure must be adopted to make the Congress franchise popular and to induce all communities to join the Congress in

large numbers. I am glad our non-Brahman friends have decided to come back to us, that it gives me great pleasure to see them so well represented here to-day. It is, however, a matter of deep regret that the number of Muslims and Sikhs has dwindled considerably. The case of the Parsis, who took such a leading part in the early life of the Congress, is worse still. I wish particularly to address the Indian Christians who have so far kept themselves aloof as a body from the Congress. I should like to tell them that if they are under the impression that they can serve the interests of their community by remaining outside the Congress they should take a lesson from the experience of my co-religionists. The Musalmans of India allied themselves with forces other than national for a number of years and after bitter experience found out that they could advance their interests only by joining the Indian National Congress and making common cause with the rest of their countrymen. The Indian Christians will serve their community better by giving up their policy of isolation adopting an Indian national outlook. I should like to see every section of our people entering into a healthy rivalry to contribute its share to the conduct of national affairs through the Congress. The doors of the Congress should be thrown wide open to all parties and we should stop at nothing short of a surrender of basic principles to bring back every party to the Congress. Difference of opinion are bound to exist but the best and the only place to fight them out is and should be the common platform of the mother of all political organisations in India, the Indian National Congress. Each party has an unrestricted right and opportunity to convince the Congress of the correctness of its point-of-view and to enlist the support of the majority for the policy it advocates. If the majority, rightly or wrongly, fails to appreciate the correctness of that policy, until we have found a substitute for the rule of majorities, the only democratic and workable principle is to respect the decision of the majority. This does not mean that the minority loses its right to continue its endeavours to convert itself into the majority. Differences in detail or method should not be made the occasion of secession from the parent organisation and the setting up of a separate party outside. Multiplicity of parties on minor differences is bad enough for countries already free and independent. We who are fighting for our elemental rights cannot afford to indulge in the luxury of a cramping and complicated system of parties. A great responsibility rests on the shoulders of the Indian 'intelligentsia' whose duty it is to educate the masses to a realisation of their rights and privileges. The confusion caused by the existence of a number of parties leads to distraction and the great work of the uplift of the masses remains neglected. Let us concentrate on the largest common measure of agreement rather than emphasise points of disagreement. After all, the points on which we agree are many and those on which we disagree but few.

#### Unity in the Councils.

"I do not believe in the Councils. At the same time I am aware that the Congress has permitted its numbers, if they so desire, to enter the Councils and a considerable member of my fellow-workers believe that they can render useful service to the country from inside them. To all these I humbly suggest that if they must go to the Councils the least that the country expects of them is that instead of allowing their opponents to take advantage of the division in their ranks they will join forces with other nationalist groups to form a People's Party of Opposition and present a united

front. As 't is, on a majority of problems the various nationalist groups have been invariably found in the same body. The instructions issued by the Congress for work inside the Councils can form a good basis for unity of action. Should any alterations in these instructions be found necessary to facilitate joint action it is always open to any group to come to the Congress and press its viewpoint. And whatever decision the Congress gives should be loyally obeyed by all.

#### Statutory Commission.

"In the good old days we looked forward with eagerness to the conferring of "boons" by our rulers. Well, Providence in its "merciful dispensation" has conferred upon us a real boon in the shape of the Statutory Commission. The manner in which the declared wishes and sentiments of the Indian people have been contemptuously disregarded should serve as an eye-opener to the most confirmed optimist among us. It is the strongest and the most convincing plea for the sinking of our differences and closing up of our ranks. Much has been said and written on the Commission but little, as it seems to me, which touches the heart of the matter. Keen disappointment and surprise have been expressed at the exclusion of Indians from its personnel. I must confess I do not share any of these feelings. I am neither disappointed nor surprised. This was exactly what I had anticipated. It is not a question of the appointment of a Hindu peer or a Muslim knight, nor is it a question whether Indians should participate in its work as members, assessors or advisers. The principle involved is totally different. It is basic and fundamental. No sane or self-respecting Indian can ever admit the claim of Great Britain to be the sole judge of the measure and time of India's political advance. We alone know our needs and requirements best and ours must be the decisive voice in the determination of our future. It is our inherent and inalienable right. Taking its stand on these principles the Congress has all along advocated the convening of a Round Table Conference of the representatives of India and Great Britain with plenipotentiary powers to decide the bases of the future constitution of India, to be incorporated into an Act of Parliament. It is only on these conditions that Indians can consistently with national honour and dignity, agree to co-operate. Until Great Britain accepts these terms the Indian National Congress has no other alternative but to ask the people of India to treat the Statutory Commission as our Egyptian brothers treated the Milner Mission, and leave it severely alone. We can have no part or lot in a Commission which has been appointed in direct defiance of the declared will of the people of India.

#### Need for a Constitution.

"The advent of the Statutory Commission should not divert our attention from the work of framing a constitution for India. The need for it had been felt for a long time and at the Bombay meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, the Working Committee was called upon to draw up, in consultation with leaders of political thought in the country, a suitable Constitution for India. A Constitution of this nature would remove suspense and doubt from the minds of the different communities regarding their position and status in the final political arrangements of the country. It would rally the different political parties round the Congress and prove of incalculable value in the education of the people in their political rights

and privileges, telling them in exact language what they are called upon to fight for. Nor can we underrate its value in strengthening our hands generally in our struggle for the achievement of Swaraj.

"To frame a constitution for a people consisting of 320 million souls, professing different religion and speaking different languages, will be the most unique and gigantic experiment in democracy ever attempted. The task of the framers will be further complicated by the presence of Indian States exercising sovereign rights in their territories. Whatever be the final form of the constitution, one thing may be said with some degree of certainty, that it will have to be on federal lines providing for a united States of India with existing Indian States as autonomous units of the Federation taking their proper share in the defence of the country, in the regulation of the nation's foreign affairs and other joint and common interests.

As soon as the Draft Constitution is ready the Congress should take steps to call a National Convention consisting of representatives of all interests, communities and political parties to consider it and give it a final shape.~

### The Detenus.

"The greatest misfortune that can befall a people is to lose its independence. Patriotism, universally accepted as one of the highest forms of virtue in a free people, is condemned as a vile crime in a subject race. There are very few in the ranks of our public workers who have not, at one time or another, paid the penalty of their patriotic sentiments by being consigned to prison as ordinary felons. It is not possible to give the exact number of the victims of lawlessness perpetrated in the name of peace and order, but taking into account only those sentenced in the Komagata Maru Case, the Martial Law prisoners in the Panjab where boys of 10 and 11 years were condemned to transportation for life for "waging war" against the King, those incarcerated during the days of Non-co-operation, the Sikhs imprisoned in connection with the Akali Movement and the large number of Moplahs punished and deported in 1922, the total swells to the staggering figure of 60,000. These 60,000, however, had the semblance of a trial in Ordinary Courts, Special Tribunals or the Martial Law Courts. The most tragic case is that of the hundreds of unfortunate young men who, for no other crime than the love they bore to their country, have been condemned to a lingering death in the prime of their life, without even the mockery of a trial or the framing of a charge, under the provisions of that relic of legal antiquity, Regulation III of 1818, or that cruel weapon of coercion and repression forged in 1924, the Bengal Ordinance, subsequently put on the Statute Book under the dignified appellation of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, of 1925. The story of the detenus of Bengal reads like a page from the history of the Middle Ages with this difference that while in the Middle Ages the moral consciousness of the world was not so well developed and the standard of civilisation was not so high, the tragedy of Bengal is being enacted in the twentieth century when the sense of justice and moral standards of right and wrong are several centuries in advance of medievalism and by people who claim to be the torch-bearers of civilisation. It is the most damning confession of moral bankruptcy when the Government have not the courage to bring these young men before their own law courts to be tried by their own judges and in accordance with the laws promulgated by themselves. I warn the Government against the

consequences of the bitter conclusions such cruel persecution is burning into the very soul of the nation. Other governments have tried repression to crush the spirit of freedom and for the result one has only to point to Russia and Ireland. Even the most credulous among us would find it difficult to have any faith in the genuineness of the professed intentions of the Government with regard to the future of India and the high-sounding principles enunciated in that connection when elementary rights of citizenship and liberty of person are so flagrantly violated every day. Restoration to liberty of these young men would be some indication of the advent of a better spirit in the regulation of the relations between India and Great Britain. Our efforts should not be confined merely to the release of these unhappy detenus but a repetition of a similar outrage on the inviolable rights of citizenship in the future should be made impossible by incorporating in the fundamental laws of the country a Declaration of Rights guaranteeing to every citizen liberty of person, liberty of speech, liberty of association and liberty of conscience.

#### Indian Exiles.

"Closely associated with the question of the detenus is the question of Indian nationalists compelled to live in exile in foreign lands. We may disagree with their methods of work in the past but the abnormal conditions which impelled them to adopt that course of action, have disappeared and there is no longer any reason why they should be denied the right to return to the country of their birth and to serve it peacefully.

"It is not detenus and exiles alone who suffer. Ordinary citizens are being deprived of their freedom of movement and their right of ingress and egress is being tempered with through an ingenious administration of the regulations relating to the grant of passports. Passports have become one more weapon in the hands of the bureaucracy to be used against us. India has been turned into a vast internment camp and a number of Indians abroad have been successfully locked out. Respectable citizens have been prevented from leaving India even for purposes of health, business or travel. It will, perhaps, be difficult to find a more glaring example of the abuse of these regulations than in the cancellation of the passport of Mr. Shapurji Saklatwalla, M. P. Considered worthy of the highest honour and position of trust in England by the suffrage of English citizens, he has been declared unfit to enter the land of his birth. These disabilities must go and the fetters of the prison removed altogether.

#### India and Asia.

"The task before us, as I have already pointed out, is to put India on her feet. It goes without saying that we must primarily and mainly depend on our own resources and organisation to solve our problem, but it will greatly facilitate our task if we cease to view our problems as purely local. We have long committed the blunder of looking at them in an exclusively Indian setting. It is time we studied them in their international aspect and took note of every factor in world politics which has a bearing on them. The chief defaulters in this respect have been our Hindu brethren. Perhaps their peculiar social system and the self-sufficiency of the country fostered an outlook of isolation. When the British appeared on the scene they were not slow to take advantage of this spirit of isolation and turn it into a segregation so full and complete as effectively to cut us

off from the rest of the world. So thorough was the blockade that we were kept in utter ignorance of the condition even of our immediate neighbours. The only contact vouchsafed to us was through London and only to the extent that suited the convenience of Great Britain. We saw the world through British glasses.

"The Musalman, no doubt, did, now and then, disturb the placid surface of Indian indifference to developments outside. But his interest in world politics being mainly religious, the current of national thought flowed on as before. Isolation and segregation are no longer possible. Science has annihilated distinctions and removed barriers. The world has come closer. Events on one part of the world have their immediate repercussion in the other. The inter-dependence of problems in the different countries of the world has changed the entire conception of national politics. We stand to lose considerably if, without diverting our attention from problems at home, we do not take a practical interest in happenings and developments outside. In the conflict between Europe and Asia, Asia has been worsted because Europe could take concerted action against her piecemeal and defeat her in detail. The only hope of success in our efforts to cheek the forces of European Imperialism and Capitalism lies in Eastern nations coming closer and taking a more intimate interest in the problems facing them. Fortunately we are so placed that a part of our population has cultural affinity with countries in the West of Asia while another has similar relationship with the countries lying in the East of the continent. Our economic problems are also more or less similar. Common culture and common interest should, therefore, facilitate the consummation of the scheme of an Asiatic Federation adumbrated by that great patriot Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, whom nature had endowed with an imagination to which geographical barriers were no obstacles and a vision which encompassed all the races inhabiting Asia.

"A happy beginning was made by the Congress in this direction by participating officially in the 'Congress Against Imperialism' held at Brussels, and by becoming associated with the 'League Against Imperialism.' A more important and practical step taken by the Congress was the proposal of sending a mission to give medical relief and assistance to the people of China in their present struggle. The mission could not go as the Government of India refused to grant passports. The fact that the Government had to shift their ground twice in search of an excuse for the refusal clearly shows that the underlying motive of their decision was other than what was officially expressed. The plea that it would be a departure from an attitude of strict impartiality to allow a medical mission to go to the assistance of one or the other of the belligerents is certainly novel. It would, perhaps, have been nearer the truth had it been stated that it would be a departure from an attitude of strict partiality. As a matter of fact it is neutrals alone who can send medical aid to belligerents without let or hindrance. Indeed this principle is the "raison d'être" of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies which have rendered help and assistance in the past. When advancing the plea the Government forget that fifteen years ago they themselves had given passports to a similar mission sent to Turkey while Great Britain was neutral. It is futile to lodge protests but such setbacks should not deter us from persevering in our efforts.

### National Health.

"I have taxed your patience by dwelling at such length on the problems of communal harmony and the unity of political parties for they are of the utmost importance for our national well-being at the present moment. There is, however, another subject which deserves the most serious attention of all those who have the love of India at heart. It might be urged that the problem of National Health, strictly speaking, does not fall within the purview of a political organisation and it is probably for this reason that it has, so far, not received that attention at the hands of the Indian National Congress which it deserves. It has such an important bearing on some of the most vital questions connected with the future of our people as a self-governing nation that I think it is high time the Congress realised its importance in our national economy and directed its attention towards it.

"It does not require any great power of observation to notice that there is a general deterioration in our health which has become specially noticeable during the last fifty years. Without going into any elaborate details a mere comparison between the physique of a young man of the present generation and that of the young men of the past two generations will clearly establish the fact that there has been a steady decline. The men of the past two generations, perhaps less brainy, were comparatively more active, possessed greater powers of endurance, were more courageous and less susceptible to disease. The contrast becomes more marked when we compare our level of general health with that of any other country in the West. If we examine the causes of this deficiency they would resolve themselves into climatic, social, economic, educational and hygienic.

"In a tropical climate, where the heat during the greater part of the year is intense, there is greater general relaxation and quicker exhaustion of the system, hence, for the same number of hour of work a man is more fatigued in the tropics than in temperate and colder regions and yet the working day is longer in India than in the West. There being not enough rest or recreation the Indian worker has not much chance of recoupment while the drain on the system is kept up from day to-day. This has a disastrous effect on the period of average life and on the standard of efficiency.

"The evils of our peculiar social system are so well-known that it is not necessary for me to dilate upon them. Every worker in the social cause knows the havoc played by seclusion and segregation of our female population, early marriage and rules confining the choice of marriage to a limited circle. The rigidity of the social rules affecting our domestic life is so cramping that it dwarfs the physical and mental growth of the family and has a particularly harmful influence on children. Nature is relentless in its revenge. If we defy the accepted laws of eugenics our common stock is bound to suffer.

"In general economic condition of the workers in the fields and factories, who between themselves constitute more than three-fourths of the total population of the country is such that it is with difficulty that they can keep body and soul together. They are over-worked and under-paid, ill-fed, ill-clothed and badly-housed. Their power of resistance to disease is so low that they fall easy victims to the ravages of epidemics. Cholera, plague, influenza, small-pox and malaria claim their heavy toll of millions year after year.

### Drink Evil.

"The growing evil of drink threatens further to undermine not only the public health of the country but our entire social structure. Forbidden by his religion to the Musalman and held pernicious by the Hindu, the evil of drink would not have spread so rapidly and extensively had the Government taken a sympathetic attitude towards those who were endeavouring to stop it. On the contrary obstacles were placed in the way of national workers who wished to eradicate the evil and hundreds of young men who peacefully picketed liquor shops were sent to jail to pay the penalty of their reforming zeal. The arm of the law was used to "protect" the liberty of the citizen, to intoxicate others and to get intoxicated himself, in order to compensate him for the denial of liberty in the political sphere. Well might India complain "some are born drunkards, others contract the habit and some have drunkenness thrust upon them." The health of the nation may suffer, crime may increase, efficiency of the peasant and the labourer may decrease, their children may starve but Prohibition cannot be introduced as the deficiency in the budget must be balanced. Is it too much to expect the Government to meet the wishes of the people at least in this matter by finding other means to satisfy the requirements of a balanced budget?

"The conditions obtaining among the middle and the lower middle classes cause no less anxiety. With limited incomes and forced to maintain a higher standard of life in cities, where living is comparatively dearer, they suffer great hardship indeed. Their hand-to-mouth existence and consequent mal-nutrition together with residence in congested, unhealthy areas, make them particularly susceptible to tuberculosis. The appalling figures of infant mortality and deaths during child-birth, both in rural and urban areas, are matters of great concern and deserve our immediate attention.

"These evils are aggravated by a lack of proper provision for health and hygiene. There is much room for improvement in our general standard of cleanliness both in relation to the person and the household. Houses should be built with better provisions for ventilation and light and with satisfactory sanitary arrangements. Villages and towns should be planned with due regard to water supply, sanitation and conservancy arrangement. Stricter supervision of foodstuffs and better control of markets in every town and village, however small, is another crying need of the country. Medical relief should be organised on a wider scale. By these methods alone can we bring under control all preventable diseases and eradicate them finally.

"The question of public health and hygiene is intimately correlated with that of mass education. Unless the mass-mind is prepared by a process of suitable education it can neither appreciate nor carry out the most elementary and essential reforms affecting the health and happiness of the masses. Our Municipalities and Local Boards, in spite of the many restrictions placed on their powers, can still do a great deal to arrest the decline in physique of the people and raise the general level of the health of the nation.

"I have so far discussed the question of national health in its relation to our disabilities but making every allowance for them I cannot but deeply regret the general apathy and neglect shown towards the all-important question of physical culture. Even well-to-do people, who have both leisure and means, do not take much interest in it. This apathy was perhaps an inevitable result of the complete disarming of the nation and depriving the



youth of the country of opportunities of developing its talents for military leadership. People were forced to rely on others for the defence of their homes and hearths. A spirit of dependence settled down on the nation. Old "akharas" and gymnasia disappeared and with them the spirit of self-reliance, the very essence of national self-respect. Government shows a nervousness difficult to appreciate, whenever the question is mooted that this emasculating general disarming of the people be put an end to and Indians given a chance to prepare themselves for the defence of their country. The fear that carrying of arms is likely to disturb the general peace and tranquility, is entirely baseless. There have been fewer breaches of the peace in Indian States where there is no Arms Act, than in British India where even sticks beyond regulation size may not be carried. Establishment of gymnasia and centres of physical culture, in fact, the entire question of national health turns on Finance. Private efforts, howsoever well organised, cannot meet the needs of the situation. It is only by devoting a substantial portion of public revenues that such reforms of a real nation-building character can be taken in hand. Sixty per cent of the revenues of India is absorbed by the Military Department in the name of the Defence of the country but the Government ought to know that there can be no defence of the country when people are allowed to exist in such a state of utter physical degeneration. The defence of the country does not lie in building costly block-houses and erecting fortifications, nor even in procuring expensive armament or the mechanisation of the Army. Money can make trenches but men alone can man them. The real defence of the country lies in tackling the problem of Maudood and improving the general health of the nation.

#### Conclusion.

"In conclusion, I wish to urge that the country should lose no time in preparing itself for the next move forward. I urge that all our energies and resources be concentrated on fighting the enemy residing inside our body politic, namely, communal and political discord. I beseech Hindus and Muslims to accept the settlement of the Congress, which is just and fair to both, and to sink their differences. I press for an immediate and countrywide reorganisation of the Congress and cordially invite all communities and political parties to join the national organisation in a body in order to strengthen it and make it truly representative and national. I appeal to all those who still desire to go to the Councils to close their ranks and form one People's Party of Opposition on the basis of the Congress Programme. I strongly advise the Congress and the country to stand aside and have nothing whatever to do with the Statutory Commission. I reiterate the demand of the Congress for a Round Table Conference of Indian and British representatives with plenipotentiary powers as the only method in which we could co-operate with Great Britain regarding the settlement of the future of India. I recommend the speedy preparation of the future Constitution of India and the calling of a National Convention for its adoption. I suggest to my people that we should consider Indian problems in their international setting and cultivate cultural relation and maintain friendly contact with Asiatic countries. I call upon my countrymen not to relax their efforts until they have secured the release of the detenus of Bengal and made repetition of a similar outrage on the elementary rights of citizenship impossible. I draw

the attention of the country to the alarming condition of our National Health and earnestly appeal that effective measures be devised to check the causes which are leading to its steady deterioration. These, in my opinion, are the lines on which we can wold India into a nation with an irresistible will and determination to conquer all obstacles in the way of the realisation of its great Ideal and occupy its proper place among the Nations of the World".

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### Proceedings and Resolutions.

Dr. Ansari took an hour and a half to finish his address and when he finished with recapitulation of his views on the main problems there was a prolonged cheering. Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar, General Secretary then read messages wishing success to the Congress received from Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mr. Jinnah, Lala Lajpat Rai, Sj. Subash Chandra Bose, Madam Sun Yat Sen, Dr. Kitchlow and others.

The following five resolutions were then put from the chair and passed unanimously without debate :—

#### 1. — Condolence.

The Congress places on record its profound sorrow at the untimely demise of Mr. P. C. Roy, one of the former secretaries of the Congress Committee and conveys its sympathy to his family.

#### 2. — Sympathy for Kakori Victims.

This Congress puts on record its sense of deep pain at the callous attitude of the Government in not commuting the brutal sentences passed in the Kakori case against Sjts. Ramaprosad Biswas, Rajendra Nath Lahiri, Asfaquallah and Rohan Singh inspite of the powerful public indignation aroused by the vindictive sentences and offers its heartfelt sympathy to the families of the victims.

#### 3. — League Against Imperialism.

This Congress welcomes the formation of the League against Imperialism at the Congress against Imperialism held at Brussels in February 1927, and approves of the decision of the All-India Congress Committee to associate itself with this organisation in the struggle against Imperialism.

#### 4. — China.

This Congress sends its warmest greetings to the people of China and its assurance of full sympathy with them in their fight for emancipation and records its condemnation of the action of the Indian Government in refusing passports to the Medical Mission which the All-India Congress Committee wanted to send to China. The Congress has noted with deep resentment that Indian troops have again been used by the British Government to further their imperialist designs in China and to hinder and prevent the people of China from gaining their freedom.

The Congress demands that all Indian troops and police forces still in China be recalled immediately and that no Indian should go to China in future as an agent of the British Government to fight or work against the Chinese people who in the opinion of the Congress are the comrades of the Indian people in their joint struggle against Imperialism.

The Congress further demands the withdrawal of Indian troops, police and consulate guards from Mesopotamia and Persia and from the British colonies and foreign countries wheresoever they may be.

### 5. — Refusal of Passports.

This Congress condemns the policy of the British Government of the refusal to issue passports to some Indians who desire to visit foreign countries and of preventing the entry into India of some Indians and others by the refusal to grant them the necessary visas. The Congress demands that all unnecessary passport formalities be done away with and full freedom of movement to and from India be permitted.

The Congress particularly condemns the action of the British Government in cancelling the Indian visa of Mr. Shapurji Saklatvala and thereby preventing him from visiting his native country and making him an exile. The Congress records its appreciation of the courage with which Mr. Saklatvala has consistently stood for the freedom of India in spite of the opposition and difficulties he has had to face in a hostile chamber where there was often no second person to support him.

### 6. — War Danger.

Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru then moved his resolution on war danger which ran as follows :—

This Congress has noted with grave concern the extraordinary and extensive war preparations which the British Government is carrying on in India and in the Eastern seas specially in the North-West Frontier of India. These preparations for war are not only calculated to strengthen the hold of British Imperialism in India in order to strangle all attempts at freedom but must result in hastening a disastrous war in which an attempt will be made to make India again a tool in the hands of the foreign imperialists. The Congress declares that the people of India have no quarrel with their neighbours and desire to live at peace with them and assert their right to determine whether or not they will take part in any war.

The Congress demands that these war preparations be put an end to and further declares that in the event of the British Government embarking on any warlike adventure and endeavouring to exploit India in it for the furtherance of their imperialist aims it will be the duty of the people of India to refuse to take any part in such a war or to co-operate with them in any way whatsoever.

In moving the resolution Pandit Nehru said that of all resolutions that would come up before the Congress there was none more important than this. Any war now-a-days would bring as a consequence international disaster. War preparation in and near India were particularly disastrous to the people of India. He referred to the development of the Singapore Base and also the war preparations made in India itself, such as the formation of the Royal Indian Navy, improvement of transport facilities in the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province and the concentration of air fleet in that territory. These preparations, he emphasised, were not made without special purpose. On the contrary, there were definite proposals in that connection and some of these had even been published by English newspapers. Indians therefore must make their position clear that they resumed the right to determine whether or not they would take part in any war and if they did so, England's proposals might undergo a change.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Nimbkar who observed that rapid war preparations were being made by the Imperialists in all frontiers of India and above all, the War Secretary was now in this country. Britain wanted to fight China, Britain wanted to fight Afghanistan, Britain wanted to fight Russia. Britain would not get help from her colonies and was therefore working to get help from India. In fact, India was going to be made the base of war. It was therefore a question for the Indian Nation—

alists whether while they were fighting for their own Swaraj they were going to be tools in the hands of the British Imperialists in fighting independent nations which wanted to be at peace with India.

The resolution was explained in Tamil and Telugu and declared carried amidst cheers. The Congress then adjourned.

## SECOND DAY—27TH DECEMBER 1927.

### 7.—Sympathy with Mr. Awari.

Attendance was a little thinner to-day than on the opening day. Dr. Ansari announced amidst cheers that all obstacles in their way had been removed by the Hindu and Muslim leaders having unanimously agreed to a draft compromise on the Hindu-Muslim settlement.

On the motion of President the house agreed to sympathise with Mr. M. Awari of Nagpur Satyagraha. Dr. Ansari read out a telegram from Nagpur that to-day was the 80th day of Mr. Awari's fasting. The following is the text of the resolution :—

This Congress congratulates General Manchershaw Awari, Leader of the Arms Act Satyagraha movement of Nagpur, and his followers on their sturdy patriotism and self sacrifice and express the deepest sympathy on the nation on the 75th day of hunger-strike of Mr. Awari.

### 8.—Separation of Burma.

Maung Maungji (Burma) moved a resolution against the creation of New North Eastern Frontier Province in Burma and pleading for the Indo-Burmese entente. He declared that the Burma Government was already playing the game of divide and rule by shutting out the Indians from Burma. This was to create a frontier for the benefit of British and European exploitation. Maung Maungji appealed for unity against what he called the aggression of the West and added that India and Burma hand in hand could together achieve Liberty.

Rev. Ottama seconding in Hindi agreed with the mover that India and Burma should cast their lots together and reminded India of the historic ties between the two countries from the days of Asoka. Burma which he said was land of gold was being dominated by the Englishman who "not only beats but also loots."

Mr. Prakasam heartily associated himself with the purpose of the resolution and narrated his experiences of Burman tour and condemned attempts to separate India from Burma. The resolution was agreed to. The following is the text :—

This Congress disapproves of all attempts to separate Burma from India and condemns the idea of creating the North-Eastern Frontier Province.

This Congress appeals to the Indians and Burmans in their mutual interests to promote Indo-Burmese 'entente' in all possible ways.

### 9.—Independence.

Pandit Jawaharlal in moving the resolution on independence amidst cheers said :

"It is my high privilege to place before you the following resolution :—

"This Congress declares the goal of the Indian people to be Complete National Independence".

"I do not think I can describe it better than the distinguished ex-President of the Congress, Dr. Besant, who said, "It is a dignified and clear statement of India's goal" (cheers). After the almost complete unanimity with which the Subjects Committee approved it is unnecessary for me to make a long speech. But I wish to make clear one or two points. This resolution, although it makes clear the goal, does not change the present creed of the Congress. It declares that the Congress stands to-day for Complete Independence. None-the-less it leaves the doors of the Congress open to such persons as may perhaps be satisfied with a lesser goal. This resolution means what it says. It means the control of defence forces of the country. It means the control over the financial and economic policy of the country and the control of the relations with foreign countries, because nothing short of this can be called Independence. This goal is for us an immediate goal and not a goal of far distant future. Whether we achieve it to-day or to-morrow or ten years hence, I cannot say. It depends on the country's strength. But the moment we develop that strength, we can achieve it. This goal is worthy of the high destiny of India and I hope it will be realised in near future.

Mr. SAMBAMURTI (Andhra) seconding the resolution repudiated the assertions made by the British statesmen that the right to rule India belonged to England. He said the resolution was the only reply to the arrogant challenge thrown by Lord Birkenhead. The politicians, the whole gang of them, had told the British public that there would be no inter-partnership. He did not believe in Dominion Status, as there was conflict of interests. He ridiculed the *pax-Britannica* as peace of grade and said that he would any day prefer anarchy. "Let the British withdraw, we shall not be afraid of the anarchy for out of that anarchy would come a new order which would be the wonder of humanity.

Mr. V. L. SASTRI (Andhra) opposed the resolution, but he was not allowed to proceed. But before he uttered the first sentence of opposition there were cries of "get down" and 'shamo' from all sides. Mr. Sastri faced the audience self composedly. The Congress Secretary tried to silence the audience but failed. Dr. Ansari then came to the rostrum and appealed to the gathering to give Mr. Sastri a patient hearing. Mr. Sastri then proceeded, the sum total of his speech was that by passing the resolution they would only be stultifying themselves.

Mr. SATYAMURTHY supported the resolution. "It seems to me," he said, "that the only answer we can give to the insulting challenge of Great Britain by means of the Simon Commission is to declare our national independence. By this resolution, if passed, the people throughout the world will know that the Indians are no longer political children. This will also mean that other parties who, simply because the Congress asked for Dominion Status, wanted to hand over the Army, Navy and foreign affairs to foreigners, will tone up their demand. Last but not the least our own people will walk with heads erect and hearts uplifted as free and brave men, who know they have attained their freedom and are determined to make it a fact very soon and Lord Birkenhead will know that he has to deal with a new India from to-morrow.

The resolution is a clear and dignified statement. That is the only alternative to subjection. Have you ever heard of any subject country

asking for Dominion Status? Did the United States ask for it? Did Egypt ask for it? Did Ireland ask for it? Did South Africa ask for it?

Continuing Mr. Satyamurthi said that this resolution meant that the Indians should be in India what the Britishers were in Britain controlling their own Army, Navy, Air force and foreign affairs, not acknowledging Sovereignty of Great Britain, making their own treaties and their own wars and treating England little more mercifully than England was treating India to-day (laughter). They were told by nodding wiseacres that Dominion Status was attainable and independence not. His answer was, if India was to be a Dominion, she would become the Mother Country by sheer weight of size and population and England would become a colony to India (laughter). Great Britain would then in her own interests prefer India to be independent from that point of view. If anybody believed that he could get Dominion Status by sweet words, he must be an irredeemable fool. Lord Birkenhead had insolently asked "Do you want army and navy to be withdrawn?" On behalf of the Congress the speaker said, "yes". If Birkenhead withdrew the British army and navy then India could teach him that his only job is to write to newspapers and not seek to govern India. After all India paid for the army and navy and her people were good soldiers and sailors and they had friendly neighbours in Asia. England had no friend anywhere in the world (laughter).

Mr. Satyamurthy said that Congressmen have no use for Councils which were mere toys. Concluding he declared: "The resolution tells Lord Birkenhead that he has not to fear our fate. Our deserts are not small. We are willing to put it to the touch to win or lose it all."

Moulana Shaukat Ali who was received with tremendous cheering said that he was happy to have lived to see the day on which all the Indians declared themselves free men. He had been an independent man for several years. That was probably the reason for his being so stout (laughter). Thank God, he cried, the whole of India had declared itself free.

The resolution was then put to the vote and declared unanimously carried amidst cries of "Mahatma-ki-Jai" and "Vando Mataram."

#### 10. — Detenus.

Dr. J. M. Das Gupta next moved the following resolution:—

"This Congress strongly condemns the policy of the Indian Government and the Bengal Government of imprisoning, interning and exterminating innocent citizens and Congress workers without trial for indefinite periods under the Bengal State Prisoners' Regulation III of 1818 and the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1925 and sends fraternal greetings to all those who have suffered and are suffering for the cause of their motherland, owing to the above repressive policy of the Government.

This Congress demands the immediate release of all detenus who have been put under restraint without trial and of all political prisoners who have been convicted by Special Tribunals constituted under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1925.

(ii) This Congress also strongly condemns the arrest and imprisonment of Sardar Santa Singh under the Bengal State Prisoners' Regulation III of 1818."

The mover said that he had not much difficulty in placing the case of the detenus before them because the only crime of the detenus was the love of the motherland. He then traced the history of the Bengal Ordinances which started from 1923 when Desabandhu Das launched the great movement. The first people to be arrested were those on whom Mr. C. R. Das

depended for conducting his newspaper "Forward." When Mr. C. R. Das launched the movement in real earnest, the Government tried to stultify it by arresting his chief lieutenants. They arrested Mr. S. C. Mitra whom they had the good fortune of having in their midst to-day. Mr. Mitra was at that time the Secretary to the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. The bureaucracy thought that by imprisoning them they would seriously impede the Congress work in Bengal. Mr. A. B. Roy, who was also in charge of another department, was the next person to be arrested and so on and the final blow was given to the present leader of their province Mr. S. C. Bose.

The followers of C. R. Das, young men full of health and ardent in doing national service, were taken away from the midst of their work and from the midst of their families. A good many of them were kept in jail nearly five years now and he believed something like 150 detenus were still suffering. Although the Governor of Bengal had promised last August that the Government would gradually release them, it proved to be one of those usual promises they had from the Government but which were never fulfilled. Instead of releasing these young men a very large number of them were interned in villages which were very carefully selected as a general rule in most unhealthy places. He knew some of his friends who were interned in such villages were not only placed in most unhealthy areas imaginable but were cut away from all social intercourse. They were in every way persecuted and they had many wants, with scanty allowances barely sufficient to subsist and they thus led a life which was worse than death. The political detenus were suffering from several fatal diseases and wherever these national workers were interned for any length of time, they contracted these fatal diseases. The same was the fate of Mr. C. R. Das and Tilak Maharaj and all their predecessors and the same fate had also overtaken Mr. S. C. Bose. A very large number of detenus were suffering from all sorts of diseases. The detenus were not having proper medical help in most places and not only that the monetary help given to them was too inadequate for medical expenses. A large majority of the detenus were the bread-earners of their families and the subsistence allowance that was given—and not always given—to their families was so meagre that to quote one instance Mr. Harikumar Chakravarti practically died without a proper medical relief. If they really plodged themselves to work for independence and to think of independence it was up to them also to stand up for those who were suffering for the mother country. The Bengal detenus were willing to remain in jails not for a few years but all their lives if their detention could in any way help their cause but it was up to them not only to express their sympathy for them but to devise some means by which they could come out and be able to help them.

Dr. SATYAPAL, in seconding the resolution, said that there was no country in the surface of the world where patriotism was a crime. Indian patriots of the first water rendering national service of the most devoted type instead of being placed in the highest possible positions were rotting in jails. He regretted that under the name of law and order, the so-called tribunals were nothing else but the machinery of the executive to execute the innocent and to detain the best sons of the soil in iron bars. The persecutions that were going on had practically no justification in the eyes of the law. To those friends behind the bars they should send greetings to be prepared for a huge sacrifice to free India and this was the only greeting that could soothe

the ears of the young men who for the sake of the country were separated from their dear and near and had sacrificed their life and health for the sake of the country.

Mr. G. Harisvethama RAO in further supporting the resolution said that at a time the Statutory Commission was about to come to India the flower of the youth in Bengal, people who had sacrificed their all for the service of the motherland were still rotting in gaols without even the mockery of a trial. Patriots like Sjt. Subash Chandra Bose, hundreds of them were undergoing imprisonment for indefinite periods and therefore it was necessary to unanimously pass the resolution.

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously.

### 11.—Boycott of Simon Commission.

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar next moved the following resolution :—

Whereas the British Government have appointed the Statutory Commission in utter disregard of India's right of self-determination, this Congress resolves that the only self respecting course for India to adopt is to boycott the Commission at every form. In particular (a) this Congress calls upon the people of India and all Congress organisations in the country (i) to organise mass demonstration on the day of the arrival of the Commission in India, and similar demonstrations in the various cities of India which the Commission may visit; (ii) to organise public opinion by vigorous propaganda so as to persuade Indians of all shades of political opinion effectively to boycott the Commission. (b) The Congress calls upon non-official members of the Indian Legislatures and leaders of political parties and communities of India and all others not to give evidence before the Commission nor co-operate with it in any manner, public or private, nor attend or participate in any social functions given to them. (c) This Congress calls upon the non-official members of the Indian Legislatures, (i) neither to vote for nor serve on Select Committees that may be set up in connection with this Commission; (ii) to throw out every other proposal, motion or demand for grant that may be moved in connection with the work of the Commission. (d) This Congress also calls upon the non-official members of the Legislatures not to attend meetings of the legislatures except for the purpose of preventing their seats being declared vacant or for the purpose of making the boycott effective and successful or for the purpose of throwing out a ministry or of opposing any measure which, in the opinion of the Working Committee of the Congress, is detrimental to the interests of India. (e) This Congress authorises the Working Committee to confer with and secure the co-operation, wherever possible, of other organisations and parties with a view to make the boycott effective and complete.

In moving it he said :—I first apologise to you in my own language for the necessity of speaking in English. I propose to put the case for the boycott of the Statutory Commission in as brief a manner as possible, for Mrs. Besant and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya are going to speak and it will not be necessary for me to more than indicate the reasons which have impelled the Congress this year to put it in this form before you. It has been said, and I have sometimes felt, that without a spur and stimulus national unity is not always steady. The Punjab wrong, the Khilafat wrong and other things made the people not only alive during the two years but made the Indian Nation a live-force in the whole world. The impetuous Viceroy by his management of the situation is claimed by the British people to have subjugated the Indian people and to have very clearly out-manoeuvred us. Fortunately for us, Lord Birkenhead and the British Cabinet, His Excellency Lord Irwin and his members, Indian and European, of the



Executive Council have come to our rescue this year. This Statutory Commission has really been the one thing needed to make it quite clear what our duty is. Till then it was in the minds of some that they could still place some faith in the British Government. I am afraid that that faith has not been deserved by the British Government at any time. But nevertheless we Indian people have been accustomed to place faith in people who deserved no faith from us and unfortunately that faith has been placed by some schools of thought. Fortunately to-day India witnesses a greater unanimity of opinion than it witnessed during the great days of non-cooperation. Then it was only those who came within the Congressfold fully that were able to participate in the movement. To-day members of the Liberal League who were supposed to have differed from the Congress on many points have justified their patriotism and have shown that they are going to boycott the Commission. I hope Dr. Supru, Mr. Chintamani and Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar will continue without any flinching the pledges they have given to their party and the nation, that they will relentlessly boycott the Commission. I am certain that they will not agree if the Chairman of Statutory Commission says a few words or accepts a cup of tea from them. I am certain they will not go back. I am equally confident that Mr. Jinnah and Sir Chimanlal Setalvad will stand by us in this hour of need. There have been some telegrams which I understand from Mrs. Naidu are not altogether quite accurate. I believe that we have no right to judge of our colleagues until it is made clear to us that they are not going to co-operate with us. We must trust in their co-operation and have no doubt whatever that the way in which the same Bombay information has been utilised by the English Press will make our friends realise the extreme gravity of any step that might take which will be in the direction of letting us down. I have therefore no doubt that Mr. Jinnah and Sir Chimanlal Setalvad will stand firmly by us.

Then, again, our Nationalist friends headed by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai and Dr. Moonjee are going to stand by us. In fact the difference between Nationalist friends and ours has been only in regard to the Council programme and not in connection with any other matter. I have therefore the greatest pleasure in saying that Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in spite of his ill-health has come to our rescue and as your President told you to-day he has helped us also to find a solution of the Hindu-Muslim dispute.

Your gratitude and my gratitude must go to our Moslem friends all over India and to those that have come here for the great support which they have given to us. Just imagine what it must be for them even to create a split in the Moslem League for the purpose of boycotting the Statutory Commission. Therefore no longer doubt the patriotism of our Moslem brethren. Take it from me they will stand not only shoulder to shoulder they will even be in the vanguard and lead us. Maulana Shaukat Ali in his speech on independence has given you many indications that the Hindus and Mussalmans are going to weld themselves together once more for the purpose of freeing the country from the foreign yoke. In this state of things why is it that some parties still hesitate to join us? I regret Lord Sinha's statement. I regret the statement of those who qualify their statements by, untils, ifs and buts. I really have no sympathy with that kind of school nor do I think it right on the part of Indian publicists that they

should lag behind others. There are some people who still think that co-operation with the British people will yield successful results. They are a handful and I hope they will be a negligible handful of people. The vast majority of political parties and the independent schools of thought led by Mr. Jinnah, the Nationalist party led by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai and Dr. Moonjee and the Liberal party led by Mr. Chintamani and others have come into this boycott movement. Dr. Besant's adhesion has been of inestimable value and I have no doubt her support will be valuable right through the campaign. In this state of things I hope that whatever the amendments may be, whatever opposition to this resolution may be, I want not one single voice against the effective and successful boycott raised in this Congress. It will be a disgrace to the fair name of Madras, it will be a disgrace to the Congress if any one opposes this boycott resolution and I would ask you therefore to carry this resolution unanimously. The reasons why we should boycott the Statutory Commission have been told you from a hundred platforms and in hundred newspapers. Put shortly it is this. The sovereignty of the people of India must be exercised by the people themselves. We have claimed the right of self-determination, the right to determine our own constitution and that right to determine our own constitution has been recognised at the time of the war by Mr. Lloyd George, the then Premier of England. Nevertheless it has suited the bureaucracy, Lord Birkenhead and the British Government and it has suited the English Labour Party to go back upon their own resolution and interpret and misinterpret and tell us many interesting things of which you have seen similar examples in the past notably in connection with the enactment of the Bengal Ordinance. I would therefore appeal to you to put aside any faith whatever in the Labour Party, any faith whatever in English people in connection with this. The only exception that I would make is of those English people who are entirely with us like the members of the Independent Labour Party, Mr. Fenner Brockway, who I am sorry to say has been seriously injured in a motor accident and is not with us to-day; and Mrs. Besant of course claims to be an Indian and we have recognised her as an Indian. Therefore you will not bring her into that category. I would ask you to pass this resolution unanimously without any hesitation.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar then read the several parts of the resolution and explained them. And in conclusion said, "Kindly see that this boycott resolution is carried without any dissentient voice. Let it not be heard that a single man or woman would say this Statutory Commission is to be co-operated with in any fashion. Any amendments to make the boycott effective I can understand, but I hope that there will not be a single amendment to turn it down. With these words I commend this resolution to your acceptance."

Dr. Annie BESANT in seconding the resolution said:—

Friends, I want this afternoon in seconding the resolution to lay stress only on two points in the resolution and to ask you to endorse them. The resolution deals with the methods of boycott and the Congress relies on you to carry out these methods. The main points I want to mention are only two. The first of these is the one in the beginning of the resolution where it says that the British Government have appointed the Statutory Commission in utter disregard of India's right of self-determination. Then

it goes on to say that the Congress resolves that the only self-respecting course for India to adopt is to boycott the Commission at every stage and in every form. The first of these points recalls to us an incident very very early in the War when the overwhelming forces of Germany on the road to Paris saw only a very small number of British soldiers—called by their Emperor a contemptible little army. In number it was contemptible but not in courage. They checked the advances of the great German hordes to Paris. They fought every yard of the way and pressed on yard by yard. At last they lay exhausted on the ground and as they lay there they saw not far off sparks of light reflected from the sun falling on the lancers of the Indian cavalry and as the cavalry came nearer and nearer galloping as far as they could gallop, in the despairing need of the situation, I read in the papers of England how the men on the ground tried to raise a cheer as the Indian cavalry galloped past them to try to check the German advance. They rode on, they checked the advance, they gave time to England to gather their distant resources and at that time there was one great cry of gratitude that went up from the Houses of Parliament, from the Press of England and others declaring how India had saved the situation and the Indian troops continued their splendid work. It was then that they spoke of self-determination. It was then said by the Prime Minister of England that self-determination applied to tropical countries as well as to the West. India alone has no self-determination. The war went on, the King sent over his uncle the Duke of Connaught to open the first legislature in India after the reforms and in that message to India the King-Emperor used the words “the Bill was the first step towards Swaraj within my Empire.” Then you may remember that before that message two of the highest officials that had to do with India went on a tour round India. The Secretary of State for India came over here. The Viceroy of India, the King’s representative, toured India with the Secretary of State in order to see every class of Indian people who wanted to represent their needs and so to gather India’s thoughts before the Parliament came upon the stage at all. Look at the different then and now. You will see why I lay stress on these two points of self-determination and the self-respect of India demanding the boycott of the Parliamentary Commission coming over here. The question for us is a point of honour and not so much what we can get by accepting what England gives. We are told that only a Parliamentary Commission can be appointed because it is said that Parliament must decide the future of India. The Parliament had to decide India’s needs in those days, I venture to point out, as much as it has to do now. The two highest officials representing the King toured in India then in order to find out what India needed. Now they send over a small Commission of Parliament not including a single Indian in it. At that time, I would remind you, when Mr. Montagu came over to India and the Viceroy toured with him, England was in deadly danger and needed the help of India’s soldiers who were good enough to die in trenches, who were good enough to stay in the cold till they were lifted up from their paralysed condition. Now those for whom they fought, those whose liberty was saved have been forgotten and thrown aside. Now we hear nothing of self-determination. We hear nothing of India’s needs and India’s services to the Empire, nothing of the sacrifices made by thousands of poor Indian soldiers. We are only told that this Parliamentary Commission shall come

and shall decide the kind of legislation necessary for this country. Before that, it was not a Parliamentary Commission but two of the highest officials. The report drawn from what they heard from Indians was the basis of the legislation.

However much we were dissatisfied with that, however much we said that it was unsatisfactory, nonetheless India was treated with respect as a nation that had a right to represent her needs in the very centre of the Empire and now all that is lost. We hear nothing of India's rights. If others forget our rights, we should remember our duty to resent the insult on the Indian people. On this no one is the judge except India herself. A man's honour, a nation's honour must be felt, decided, and thought over by the man or by the nation as the case may be, and not by others for him. If a man's honour is touched, the man must stand up against it. If a nation's honour is touched the nation must rise up and protest against the insult and that is what I ask you to do by passing this resolution. It is not a question whether it is the best way or not. It is not a question whether we shall get much more by going before this Commission that we can get in other ways. My answer is even if we get a hundredfold at the price of India's honour it is not worth having, because honour is greater than any other gift by another nation. Its defence lies in the hands of Indians themselves. I ask you to take it into your own hands as other assemblies of India in other parts of the country are sure to do. The Congress is the oldest political association in India, the body that has in it great political Indians striving for the welfare of their country, and it is its voice that has to be heard to bring pressure upon England. So we shall say to England, "We will have nothing to do with your Commission. You have constituted it without any consultation with us, you ask us to accept a constitution which Indians have to live under not the British people." In these circumstances have we no right to say that India must have the opportunity to say what she likes about that constitution on equal terms with this Parliamentary Commission? After all, what is the Parliamentary Commission composed of. For the most part it consists of men about whose qualifications we have to turn to the "Who is Who." Surely, if a commission is to come over it should be composed of men who know India. What is the use of men who know nothing of India? We are told that they have no prejudice. It is an empty bucket. We want men who know India's needs and India's wrongs, men who can understand Indian problems. Then, we should not prejudice them. What about the Civil Service, the so-called British Civil Service in India? Are they going to stay away from the members of the Commission? Are they never going to meet them talk with them, persuade them and give them their own ideas as to what is best for this baby of India who cannot manage her own affairs? They say they are the trustees of India. If that is so what right has the trustee to sit in judgment on his own administration? The members of the Commission are all men who do not know India, who do not know her needs nor sympathise with her wrongs. I would say to you, friends, pass this resolution unanimously. It does not matter so much about the details this that or the other. All these we can work out as we go on varying the methods in the various provinces according to the conditions in each. Let the Congress with one voice pass this resolution. Let not one Indian venture to dissent from India's answer to the insult on her honour. Let us

say "You have boycotted us, we boycott you." You have said that no Indian shall sit on the Commission. We say "let no Englishman judge India's fitness." Englishmen have administered India very much more for England's benefit than for India's greatness. So let us say that we will have nothing to do with the Commission and that we will not even touch it with the tips of our fingers. Our honour is our own. We think it right to guard it. We are responsible to India for our position in this matter and more for the sake of the motherland of India, for the sake of our children and grand-children who hereafter shall be free or bound as we fight this great battle for freedom. Let us stand firm, unchanging, determined to succeed. The boycott will be the answer to Lord Birkenhead, it will be India's answer to a man who insulted her by saying that she will not dare to have a boycott and that if she did, he would see. Let him see that the answer comes from every town in India: "We shall have nothing to do with the Commission. Let them go back and consult India what India wants." (Cheers).

Pandit Madan Mohan MALAVIYA in supporting the motion traced the history of the British rule in this country up to the Great War and said that when the tide of march of the German invasion was turned back and victory was won by England with the tremendous help of the Indian troops, England out of gratitude to India granted the existing reforms and promised full responsible government. A great change had come over the Englishmen now. Instead of asking the Indians to prepare a constitution for India or at least associating Indians with the Commission the British people had chosen the members of the Commission purely from the two Houses of Parliament with a view to getting evidence favourable to a verdict that India is not fit for self-government. If a Commission was composed of Americans, Frenchmen and Germans to decide the question, that Commission would certainly give a verdict in favour of full responsible government to India and nothing else. There was no country better prepared to have the system of full responsible government to-day than India. (Cheers). As India was not consulted in the matter of the composition of the constitution the only attitude to be taken up by India was complete boycott of the Commission. That alone would be consistent with the national self-respect of India. By so doing, there would be greater gain to India than by submitting to the humiliation of giving evidence before such a Commission. They should be determined to boycott the Commission, decide accordingly and adhere firmly to that decision. The Commission was an insult to the nation and therefore every Indian should turn his back simply and sternly upon the Commission. (Cheers).

#### A m e n d m e n t s M o v e d .

Mr. Shyam Sundar CHAKRAVARTI moved an amendment to delete clause D of the resolution and provide in its place "for the resignation of membership in the councils supplemented by concentration on national programme including organising of Congress Committees throughout the country and also concentration on the promotion of khadder and boycott of foreign cloth".

Mr. Chakravarti in an impassioned speech said that what was called for as an answer to the Simon Commission was not the perpetuation of the self-determining mentality all through their life. His amendment, he thought,

was an adequate satisfactory and necessary answer. At least one speaker said they must use all strategic positions. He would ask in turn whether it was not a dirty business to fight for scraps of self-determination. They were out for complete self-determination. If independence was their goal for which Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Arabinda Ghose had been politically ostracised, did it not become them to put their foot on at least the first step of the ladder of independence? Why should they allow the representatives to look behind, to cast a longing and lingering look towards those spheres where according to their own repeated statement they have got nothing like self-determination? Dr. Ansari, the President of this Congress, said with the doctor's insight of the disease that non-co-operation had not failed them but they failed non-co-operation. What then should be their duty if they were not to stultify their President and the Madras Congress? Their duty was the same as America had done before she obtained her independence: they also should not consent to be a back house of the Westminster or Downing Street, Simla, or Delhi, Ooty, or Darjeeling. His amendment gave the finishing touch to the boycott of the Commission. They must thereafter feel and act in terms of the country and the nation. Lastly, he requested them not to miss the golden opportunity of showing what they were capable of.

Mr. T. PRAKASAM moved an amendment to omit in clause D the words "or of opposing any measure which in the opinion of the Working Committee or the Congress is detrimental to the interests of India."

He said that the Working Committee of the Congress was so far removed from the Legislative Assembly at Delhi and the Legislative Council in the provinces, that it would not be in a position to understand the difficulties of the members of these legislatures to give necessary and proper directions. His opinion was that there were only two alternatives so far as the Congress was concerned. One was to revise the Gauhati resolution which had been declared by the Chairman of the Reception Committee as a failure and by the present and the ex-presidents of the Congress. It had been admitted that all attempts to work out the resolution of the Gauhati Congress by co-operating in all beneficial measures for people had failed. He would, therefore, say the time had arrived when they should consider and take up an attitude which would justify the position of the Congress and maintain its respect and honour. If they wanted to maintain the position of the Congress they had to say they had no use for the Councils and Assemblies and they could not do anything there even to prevent mischief, not to speak of getting any benefit from the Government. They could not abandon these legislature altogether lest reactionaries should occupy them. They should, therefore, mark their attendance and keep their seats vacant engaging themselves outside in propaganda. This would be sufficiently effective answer to the Simon Commission. The Working Committee, he would repeat, was the last body to give sanctions to the Council Congress parties from time to time. In the past there were sub-committees to decide upon when walk-outs should be had and when walk-ins should be decided upon; and these everyone knew did not function properly and effectively. Committees, therefore, were only capable of giving trouble. So, he would request them to accept his amendment.

Mr. K. R. KARANT proposed another amendment to delete the clause D altogether from the resolution.

He said that in the absence of a definite programme of work outside the councils they could not give the go-bye to the Gauhati programme of Council work, and come out of the councils. He would ask how many Provincial Congress Committees had considered the aspect of the question embodied in the present resolution. Excepting the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee nowhere had this been discussed and opinion formulated. In the resolution recommended by the Working Committee the suggestion that the boycott of the councils would only last till the Simon Commission was in India, but the present resolution went one step further. The Council work, he was of opinion, should not be treated so lightly from time to time by the Congress and its executive. He would request them to treat them seriously and give the proper lead without letting their momentary enthusiasm cloud their judgments.

Mr. George JOSEPH moved yet another amendment to substitute the following for clause B :

"This Congress appeals to political and communal leaders and the spokesmen of public opinion through press and platform to suspend where they cannot end communal dissensions and acerbities and concentrate on the common grievance and demand of the people of India."

He would say at once, Mr. Joseph said, that he had the authority of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya for this amendment. He moved it because to him it appeared that there was a risk of the true purpose of the boycott being mis-conceived and a possible failure threatening them on the basis of that misconception. For, when all was said and done, the matter that they should take to heart was that when this Commission came and went about the country conducting examinations individually and in a body, interviewing people and holding informal conversations, the thing that mattered was not the evidence that might be formally tendered before the Commission. What mattered was the impression they would carry with them of the relationship between different communities, the tales that one party might say against another and one community against another, the suggestions of injustice and of failure of fair dealing. Here in this presidency also they had parties based on communal basis. Political differences he did not mind and could tolerate. A political body such as the Simon Commission would be able to appraise these differences at their true value, but if this Commission discovered that they could not possibly co-operate with one another and that they were carrying tales against one another, they would necessarily come to the conclusion that in them was not implanted the Parliamentary instinct and the capacity for doing team work. With a view to avoiding that he wanted by this amendment to have a truce declared and to see that at least when the Simon Commission was in this country an appeal should be made to the leaders of public opinion not to carry tales against one another but to concentrate on the catalogue of grievances against the British Government and press for the redress of grievances by an effective boycott of the Commission.

Mr. ABHYANKAR, speaking next, stated now was the time to speak out freely and openly. The Commission was a huge fraud. It was meant to delude Indians into thinking that they would get something out of it. No Commission ever appointed in any country had given anything to anybody (Applause). Let them remember that England had not stepped into

India to give Indians rights out of mere considerations of justice. No dominant nation had ever given a domineered nation rights out of considerations for justice. They would be hopelessly mistaken if they thought that they were losing anything by boycott of this Commission. England would certainly give them something only when they compelled her to give it and not till then. If they got into the meshes of the Commission and its enquiries, they would have to say good-bye to the goal which they had set for themselves just a few minutes back viz., independence. It had been said by previous speakers that England gave promises in times of war. There was nothing strange in them. Such people were after all human beings and no human being gave anything to another out of considerations of justice. It is because they were not "human beings" but were "beasts" they looked up to Englishmen as Gods, which they were not, and thought they would have their due. They had become "beasts" in the sense that they did not know how to kick in return when they were kicked.

One of the amendments moved was that no control should be had over the members of the legislatures but he must say there must be some control on people who had gone into the councils in the name of the Congress. It was time that disciplinary action was taken against those who acted in a manner for which there was no sanction. It was no good merely passing resolutions here. They must see that members who disobeyed them were immediately made to resign or otherwise brought into contempt by the Congress. Unless this was done they could not achieve their object. Some people stated that the members of the legislatures should resign altogether. He was against it for the simple reason that when the Congress members resigned, the sycophants, flunkies and toadies would take their places. He did not want at least the politics of this country to pass into the hands of these people. Unfortunately they had no means of keeping the councils empty if they were not to enter them. They had, therefore, to be both in the legislatures and without them. He hoped that the day would soon arrive within the next six months when the Congress Party in the legislatures would refuse to take any part in the debate and through its leader would say simply the words "our vote shall be our reply." He believed that there could be absolutely no harm done by their absence from these legislatures. They must remember having regard to the present state of affairs they had got to take this defiant step to free the virile, bold and fearless red blood of the nation from getting turbid. For God's sake now at least let them rise from that morbid stupor. (Loud Applause).

Mr. Konda VENKATAPPIAH in seconding the amendment of Mr. Sham Sunder Chakravarti wished to point out that the resolution as it stood was halting, incomplete and not comprehensive, that it was not an effective answer to the great national insult offered to them and to the denial of the right of self-determination. They had forgotten the Punjab atrocities, and they entered the councils. Still insults after insults were heaped upon them. The demand made by the united voice of the representatives of the nation for a Round Table Conference had been brushed aside and resolutions after resolutions regarding the release of detenus were trampled under foot. It was claimed as an objection to the amendment that if they resigned the seats, some fools and sycophants might enter and do them evil. They were not able to get the detenus released, nor get any wrong redressed so far. The intelligentsia of the land had to concentrate



all their energies in awakening the masses for preparing for non-co-operation. The glamour of councils had, in his opinion, to be killed and destroyed and buried deep in its grave, and until then there was no hope for the country.

Mr. Basheer Ahmed SAYEED in supporting the original resolution, observed that those who brought amendments were labouring under a misconception as to the purpose with which they went into the councils and assemblies. He recalled the time of the late Mr. C. R. Das by stating that their entry into Councils had so far done no harm and they were there to safeguard the interests of the country like policemen to prevent as much as possible the crimes being committed by a Government. If they found anything done in the councils beyond their power and were unable to prevent it, they came back to the Congress for guidance and advice. So long as there was the power of veto and certification nothing positive could be done through the councils. All the same there was an immense possibility of harm being done to the interests of the country which later on might become impossible to undo and that was why they were in the councils. Excepting the amendment proposed by Mr. George Joseph, the others were contrary to the spirit of the resolution and contrary to the times they were passing through. He therefore appealed to the House not to forget the spirit with which they entered the councils.

The Hon'ble Mr. V. RAMDAS in supporting the amendment to delete clause (d) said that it sought to impose further restrictions upon the Council programme which in the interests of the country could not work well. The freedom of getting into the councils to work there was secured by the Gauhati and Cawnpore resolutions after a great deal of fight and which this Congress should not try to go back upon. Another reason why he was opposed to this was that it called back the freedom of working in the councils. The chance of the Congress Party uniting with other parties would become very meagre and the idea of boycotting the Commission would be frustrated, because the responsivists and others would be under no obligation to the Congress Party if they were not going to be there. Congressmen would be ill-advised therefore in boycotting the councils and refusing to co-operate with other parties. Council work depended entirely upon its own merits and should not be mingled up with the Simon Commission business. Fourthly the Congress had taken up the work of the labourers and the tenants and there was a good deal of work of a beneficent character and those opportunities would be lost. They ought not, in his opinion, to curtail their utility in any manner. He also pointed out that it was impossible for the Working Committee to be always on the alert and to find out which measure was detrimental or not. He thought that it would bring more discredit on the Congress and create more discussions in the councils and that it would be detrimental to the country if they voted for clause (d). He hoped however to supplement the work in the country by being in the councils.

Mr. B. SAMBAMURTI in supporting Mr. Prakasam's amendment said that the boycott of the Royal Commission could not be carried on very effectively, if the members of the Legislative Councils were engaged in the normal work of the councils. It was therefore necessary to delete the last portion of clause (d), viz., absenting from the councils in any measure which in the interests of the Working Committee of the Congress was detrimental

to the interests of India. Mr. Ramdoss told them definitely that this clause was detrimental to the work to be done hereafter. After passing the full independence resolution it was a natural corollary that they should keep the seats vacant in the councils. That was the programme of the Sinn-Fein to occupy and vacate the seats. They must take a forward step after passing a unanimous resolution and he therefore asked every one of them to support Mr. Prakasam's amendment. With regard to the other amendment of Mr. Shyam Sundar Chakravarti the speaker went on to say that as the country would organise mass demonstrations to make the boycott real and effective, he did not want that the energies of the councillors and workers should be diverted into any other channel especially if a general election had to take place.

Mr. Mahomed ALI in supporting the resolution considered that the fact that it had occupied so much of their time was the measure of their weakness and not of their strength. Had they continued the non-co-operation movement started in 1920, there would have been no Commission, there would have been no resolution asking them to boycott it. Could any one expect Mahatma Gandhi to go before the Commission and give his evidence to prove that he and his countrymen were fit for self-rule? It was because they deserted non-co-operation, it was because they failed that they were caught in the trap of these councils.

Continuing Mr. Mahomed Ali said that because they failed to carry out a non-co-operation movement, it was because they were caught in the trap of the councils they had now to move the boycott resolution. He came before them now to ask them to support this resolution and to ask his friend Mr. Sham Sundar Chakravarti and others to withdraw their opinions and to let the resolution be passed. He had no love for the councils as they all knew already and if he entered any council, particularly after the Congress passed the resolution on Independence and if he took the oath of fealty to the throne it will stick in his throat. He could not do it. It was said that if they did not keep their seats vacant in the councils, flunkys would fill them. He would rather that flunkys sat there than that wise men should do so. They could do no good by remaining in the council and there would be no harm in flunkys alone going and sitting there. Did they want the councils to be filled by nominated members and flunkys? If members came out of the councils it would not be impossible for any Government to make any committee and ask it to be associated with the joint committee of the House of Commons and House of Lords. He had not been in any election campaign but he knew what great efforts were made by friends of his, how much money was spent by them, and how much time and eloquence have been spent to get into the councils. They were always in fear and trembling and were finding it very difficult to get into the councils. From his experience he had found that it was not so difficult to get into the councils. A far more difficult task was to get out of the councils. But they must face facts and the council friends would not come out of the councils. If they agreed that they would not sit in the councils except for certain definite purpose they should be content with that common measure. The greatest common measure was the least common measure of their strength. But they must accept it. He was himself out of the council. His brother was out of it. Mahatma Gandhi was head of the lunatics. Remaining in councils was like a fisherman trying to catch fish in a stream

from morning till evening and not succeeding in catching even one fish at the end of the day.

Mr. S. Srinivasa IYENGAR next addressed the Congress and appealed to the delegates to remember that by passing the resolution they would make the boycott really effective and command greatest possible support in the councils; if they accepted Mr. Shyam Sunder Chakravarti's amendment about the resignation of membership in the councils the result would be a disaster. Far from there being boycott there would be Select Committees elected in the legislatures in their absence. Therefore it was not a practical proposition. He knew his friends who were champions of the non-co-operation movement felt that the change in the programme of non-co-operation movement was not as successful as it was required to be. Those champions had always maintained the view that their view was the right one. Experience, however, had shown and Mahatma Gandhi himself admitted that the Swaraj Party's programme to the extent to which it went, namely the capture of the councils, was successful. So far as the work in the Councils was concerned there were always difficulties, but they were trying one experiment after another. The main reason why they could not accede to the policy of resignation of membership was that they would be playing into the hands of Government and they would be allowing men of other parties to come into the Councils. Reactionaries like the followers of Sir Mahomed Shafi would come in and the only result would be that boycott of the Statutory Commission would prove ineffective and fruitless. As men who had passed the independence resolution let them accept the political boycott. They were now pursuing the policy of boycotting British goods. The passing of the resolution on independence by the Congress was going to alter the face of the country. He would earnestly request the delegates to vote against Mr. Shyam Sunder Chakravarti's amendment. They would have noticed that Mr. Mahomed Ali had also requested him to withdraw the amendment. He was in full sympathy with Mr. Prakasam's amendment. In the Subjects Committee it was passed by a majority. His personal view had been in favour of the view put forward by Mr. Prakasam. But opinion was different on this point and he left it to the delegates to decide it. Then there was the amendment of Mr. George Joseph and Mr. Ranga Aiyar. Everybody was in sympathy with the principle of it, namely that they should suspend their communal quarrels. But he would request them not to accept that amendment because this resolution for boycott was not the proper place for mentioning the subject of communal quarrels. It was merely an appeal to the other parties. Such an appeal could be made in speeches and there were other ways of doing it. He did not see why in formal document of this description which the British people must look at, this appeal to suspend communal differences and acerbities should find a place. It was thoroughly superfluous in this resolution. The earnest appeal of Mr. George Joseph was there. Then there was the amendment of Mr. Karant for the omission of clause (D). He (the speaker) did not think that the boycott would be effective if the Council people would only go there for the purpose of preventing the Council from voting for select committees and in other matters followed discriminative co-operation. It was therefore necessary that if they should go to the Councils they should go in to throw out Ministers. They must not only turn down select committees but they should also turn down every other proposal connected with it. If they did not take enough power for

that purpose there would be difficulties afterwards. They must take the formula that they must go to the councils for the purpose of making boycott effective. To omit clause (D) would be to contradict other parts of the resolution except Mr. Prakasan's amendment; the other amendments did not commend themselves to him. He asked them to vote solidly for the resolution or at any rate in an overwhelming majority and not be distracted by any intellectual subtlety. The resolution had been thought out carefully and drafted by the Working Committee and the Subjects Committee, and then placed before the Congress. He would in conclusion ask the delegates to remember the Independence Resolution passed by the Congress and vote against Mr. Karant's amendment. He could not understand how Mr. Karant and Mr. Ramdoss pleaded for that amendment. He would again most earnestly request the delegates to accept the resolution and pass it unanimously.

#### All Amendments Lost.

Then the amendments were put to the Congress one by one and were all declared lost. The original resolution was then put to the meeting and declared carried amidst loud and continued applause. The Congress then adjourned.

### THIRD DAY—28TH DECEMBER 1927.

#### 12.—Indians in South Africa.

The Congress resumed its sitting for the third time on the 28th. After the singing of national songs Dr. Ansari read the following resolution relating to the Indians in South Africa :—

This Congress while acknowledging the relief received by the Indian settlers in South Africa and regarding the signing of the Indo-Union agreement as a token of the desire of the Union Government to accord better treatment to the Indian settlers cannot be satisfied till the status of the settlers is brought on a par with that of the enfranchised inhabitants of the Union and appeals to the Union Government to consolidate the goodwill created between the two countries by repealing all class legislation, especially the Colour Bar Act of 1926, the Clause in the Liquor Bill of 1927 prohibiting the employment of Indians as waiters in hotels and the Municipal Land Alienation Ordinances of Natal in so far as the latter involve racial segregation.

This Congress places on record its sense of deep gratitude to Desabandhu C. F. Andrews (cheers) for his great and humanitarian work in South Africa and East Africa in connection with the status of the Indian settlers in those countries.

The resolution was put to the meeting and carried unanimously amidst loud cheers.

#### 13.—Indians in East Africa.

Dr. Ansari next read the following resolution relating to the Indians in East Africa :—

This Congress enters (i) its protest against the appointment of the East African Federation Commission without any Indian representative and also against the tendency, under cover of responsible government, to give the European adventurers further powers of exploiting the unsophisticated natives of the soil and of oppressing by harassing and racial legislation the peaceful Indian settlers who settled in East Africa long before any European ever went there and who have for centuries established and enjoyed friendly commercial relations with the natives;

(ii) calls the attention of the League of Nations to the imminent danger of

infringement of the Tanganyika mandate by opening highlands in that territory exclusively for European settlement;

(iii) condemns the Feetham Report on Kenya local self-Government as giving unfair and disproportionate representation to Europeans in Nairobi and Mombasa; and hopes that the Indians in East Africa will continue their struggle for full status.

The resolution was also put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

#### 14. — Hindu-Muslim Unity.

Mrs. Sarojini NAIDU who was called upon to move the resolution on Hindu-Muslim Unity ascended the rostrum and made the following speech:—

The resolution that I am going to place before you is to me the most vital, the most epoch-making of all the resolutions that have been passed or will be passed in this historic and epoch-making Congress, even more historic and vital than the resolution on independence; because this resolution, if you pass it, practise it, if you make it a thing perfect, will be the first step towards that independence which you have declared as your goal. (Cheers.) I will now read the resolution.

The first part deals with political rights. We have arrived at some sort of settlement on the outstanding and immediate daily matters of strife and quarrel. The second part deals with religious and other rights. Before I speak of the very important step towards the goal of independence, I would ask Dr. Satyapal to give the substance of the resolution in the Hindustani and Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar in Tamil, so that everyone can know the responsibility of the vote that he records.

The resolution was then explained in Hindustani and in Tamil. The following is the text:—

#### PART A. — POLITICAL RIGHTS.

This Congress resolves that in any future scheme of constitution, so far as representation in the various legislatures is concerned, joint electorates in all the provinces and in the Central Legislature be constituted.

That, with a view to give full assurances to the two great communities that their legitimate interests will be safeguarded in the Legislatures for the present and if desired, such representation of the communities should be secured in the reservation of seats in joint electorates on the basis of population in every province and in the Central Legislature.

Provided that reciprocal concessions in favour of minorities in the Punjab may be made by mutual agreement so as to give them representation in excess of the proportion of the number of seats to which they would be entitled on the population basis in any province or provinces and the proportions so agreed upon for the provinces shall be maintained in the representation of the two communities in the Central Legislature from the provinces.

In the decision of the reservation of seats for the Punjab the question of the representation of Sikhs as an important minority will be given full consideration.

That the proposal made by the Muslim leaders that reforms should be introduced in the N. W. F. Province and British Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces is, in the opinion of the Congress, a fair and reasonable one, and should be given effect to, care being taken that simultaneously with other measures of administrative reform an adequate system of judicial administration shall be introduced in the said provinces.

That with regard to the proposal that Sind should be constituted into a separate province, this Congress is of opinion that the time has come for the redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis—a principle that has been adopted by the constitution of the Congress.

This Congress is also of opinion that such readjustment of provinces be immediately taken in hand and that any province which demands such reconstitution on linguistic basis be dealt with accordingly.

This Congress is further of opinion that a beginning may be made by constituting Andhra, Utkal, Sind and Karnatak into separate provinces.

That, in the future Constitution, liberty of conscience shall be guaranteed and no legislature, Central or Provincial shall have power to make any laws interfering with liberty of conscience.

"Liberty of conscience" means liberty of belief and worship, freedom of religious observances and association and freedom to carry on religious education and propaganda with due regard to the feelings of others and without interfering with similar rights of others.

That no bill, resolution, motion, or amendment regarding inter-communal matters shall be moved, discussed or passed in any legislature, Central or Provincial, if a three-fourths majority of the members of either community affected thereby in that legislature oppose the introduction, discussion or passing of such bill, resolution, motion or amendment.

"Inter-communal matters" means matters agreed upon as such by a Joint Standing Committee of both communities of the Hindu and Moslem members of the legislatures concerned, appointed at the commencement of every session of the legislature.

#### PART B.—RELIGIOUS AND OTHER RIGHTS.

This Congress resolves that :

Without prejudice to the rights that Hindus and Mussalmans claim, the one to play music and conduct processions wherever they please and the other to slaughter cows for sacrifice or food wherever they please, the Mussalmans appeal to the Mussalmans to spare Hindu feelings as much as possible in the matter of the cow and the Hindus appeal to the Hindus to spare Mussalman feelings as much as possible in the matter of music before mosques.

And therefore, this Congress calls upon both the Hindus and Mussalmans not to have recourse to violence or to law to prevent the slaughter of a cow or the playing of music before a mosque.

This Congress further resolves that every individual or group is at liberty to convert or reconvert another by argument or persuasion but no individual or group shall attempt to do so, or prevent its being done by force, fraud or other unfair means such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under eighteen years of age should not be converted unless it be along with their parents or guardians. If any person under eighteen years of age is found stranded without his parent's or guardian by persons of another faith he should be promptly handed over to persons of his own faith. There must be no secrecy as to the person, place, time and manner about any conversion or reconversion, nor should there be any demonstration of jubilation in support of any conversion or reconversion.

Whenever any complaint is made in respect of any conversion or reconversion, that it was effected in secrecy or by force, fraud or other unfair means, or whenever any person under eighteen years of age is converted, the matter shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators who shall be appointed by the Working Committee either by name or under general regulations.

In moving the above Mrs. Sarojini Naidu said :—The reading and the translation of this long resolution has taken almost as long as the time we take for Swaraj. Nonetheless, it has to be read, imperfect as it is, in all its various halting clauses. Usually, it is a matter of great pride and pleasure to be associated with any resolution of such importance, but I confess that it is without pleasure, without pride, but with all humility that something at least has been achieved, however imperfect. I place this resolution before you and ask you to remember the responsibility of your vote and the solemnity of the occasion. I do not propose to enter into the discussion

of any detail in connection with this long transitional Magna Charta of tolerance. It is not a Magna Charta of liberty, it is not a Magna Charta of Unity, but it is a small, a little halting Magna Charta of tolerance towards one another. (Cheers.) And in this 20th century, on this day and from this platform, when we as a nation have already proclaimed our determination of freedom in terms of independence, it grieves me, it shames me, it bows my head down before the very world to place before your ideal of independence this plea for tolerance towards one another. I want you to consider how disgraceful a chapter has been written in our contemporary history that it should be necessary after the passing of that resolution of independence to place before you a thing that we should be ashamed to have to pass. But, we must pass it to-day if we would give an earnest to ourselves and to the world that we mean to go forward on the path of freedom as a united people.

What does this resolution say? It says nothing final. It only asks you, Hindus and Mussalmans, who have been engaged in shameful conflict, in tragic conflict, heaping bitterness upon bitterness, tumult, shame upon shame, sorrow after sorrow—it asks you to cry halt and cry truce and consider your position. Would you be a living nation among the living nations of the world or would you be no more than a graveyard full of corpses in your country? This is the only question that you have to deal with in considering this question. I am one of those who have not the suspicion or shadow of any communal feeling, sectarian feeling in my whole constitution. I am one of those, I am proud to say in this hour of my humiliation, I do not know whether I am anything but an Indian. My religion, my conviction stands above all creeds, castes and races and my conviction is this, that the only religion for India is the religion of deliverance from bondage. Shall we be Hindus and Mussalmans in the magnificent sense in which our ancestral cultures were conceived and consummated? Till then we are no more than slaves leading ourselves into further slavery and tying ourselves with further ties of slavery in the consciousness that we are Hindus and Mussalmans, claiming our rights to the detriment and death of our sister communities. Therefore, this resolution puts together the two parts, one the political rights and the other the religious rights. Political rights of a community will not be conceded to conciliate one another because we are not as yet politically minded enough to know that the business of the nation is the polity of the nation which is freedom. Therefore, before we progress as a nation towards political freedom we have to settle quarrels and strifes in our temples and homes, schools and colleges, nay, a quarrel between lifelong friends, now turned to enemies for the mirage of sectarian feeling. Therefore, I will take the second part first.

The question deals with this age-long thing, the sincerity of the cow of the Hindus and the Mussalmans' objection towards music as one of the religious prohibitions. For so many centuries history has been written that side by side the Hindus and Mussalmans have been living and the old traditions will tell you that they have been living in most intimate kinship, spiritually more dear, more deep, and abiding than all the bloodkinships in the world. But, to-day, we have a hybrid education. Because we read history not quite rightly or wrongly we are imperfect in our patriotism, unsure in our ways, unstable in our aspirations. Because we are cowardly in our own spirit, we need to assert the grievances of cowards in order to

make the world believe that we are brave. That is why we Hindus and Mussalmans lay violent hands and violent tongues upon one another. It is not straight speaking but distrust of fellow cowards and fellowmen towards one another which breeds all these dissensions, conflicts, tragedies and death. Therefore after many many months and years of careful consideration, weighing the weaknesses of each community and conceding that a slave nation has weaknesses which it must outgrow before it can march on, this Congress which is equally the home of every community without favour in this country has resolved that the two communities should not be warring with one another for such foolish things as the passing of procession before mosques or sacrifice of cow. I say we should come to some adjustment, no doubt, but this temporary adjustment shall bring out permanent settlement not on the basis of weakness but on mutual trust and love, not by coercion, not by compulsion not even by persuasion but by abdication of rights that belong to one another as a sister community and as brothers and comrades. Therefore, the second part of the resolution deals with the claims of the Hindus and Mussalmans in which they respectively acquiesce not under compulsion, but they do acquiesce that the Hindus shall have the right to take their music and worship their God on the highway even before a mosque. But, what does it say? It says, Oh! Hindus whose old religion has been tolerance and magnanimous surrender not by compulsion, but by their own grace and strength, spare the religious feelings of your comrades whose home is India, whose mother is India and in the exercise of your claim and right to play music and take procession before mosques, you try to adjust your sentiments to the sentiments of your brothers under a different name, in a mosque which is as much a sanctuary as a temple to which you take your procession and music. It says to the Mussalmans: you have the right and the claim to sacrifice a cow, for reasons economic. You say you are poor and the reason why you eat a cow that is sacred to the Hindu, your co-religionist is your poverty. You have therefore economic as well as religious sanction. What do we say to the Mussalmans? We say we do not dispute your right, but we claim your grace and consideration. You are our comrades, you are our brothers, and therefore that courtesy, that spiritual consideration towards our sacrosanct sentiment must be conceded to us, must be observed by you and then we do not stand in your way to the detriment of your right and claim. We ask of you that you shall not outrage the most sacred and most immemorial Hindu racial sentiment by your pursuit and exercise of your rights for economic or religious reasons. It further says to the two slave factions: "Do not go to a court of law, do not have recourse to violence but by the magnanimous gesture of each to the other let love win where hatred and violence cannot conquer. On that basis an agreement has been come to by the most revered leaders of the Hindu community whose leadership no man dare challenge—my revered leader, friend and father, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (cheers) whose sanction has been given and by the most unchallenged leaders of the Muslim community within and without the Congress. And therefore making this as the basis of that toleration, that education in toleration, that discipline in toleration and magnanimous consideration of each other's sentiments, we proceed to the first part of the resolution which deals with political rights, as they are in a transitional condition.

The Musalman friends have made a proposal to us the Hindus. When



that proposal was made in Delhi on the 20th March. I did not know anything of the inside psychology of the mass Mussalman mind, I did not know whether I was dreaming. The Mussalmans for years and years had made separate electorate as the very sheet-anchor to their very existence in India. They said rightly or wrongly, wrongly according to my reading of the whole situation, that without separate electorates, they being in a minority, they would, in all those things that mean power, knowledge, education, wealth and social advance, be swamped by the majority community. Year after year, in spite of our requests and entreaties their leaders said, "No, No, No." To-day their leaders came suddenly and said, "Yes, Yes, Yes." They said, if you will make that magnanimous gesture, if your leaders and your people will, according to the ideals, traditions and customs of the great Hindu race, make a gracious gesture of assurance towards us who are brave, but who in our ignorance of you are suspicious and distrustful, we the leaders promise, no matter the loss, we shall march side by side with you in your pilgrimage towards liberty. They said, we give up separate electorate which has been the very citadel and sanctuary of the Moslem minority. We throw ourselves upon your mercy. We are imperfect Nationalists, we have been backward, but it took you very long to learn and you have not yet completed your education. How do you expect that we shall be complete and perfect in our solidarity when you, an advanced and powerful Hindu community, have not yet become consolidated and united? Therefore, give us time, we shall join the general electorate. But, give us a little time as a transitional measure during the period of our initiation into the lessons of wide and confident national feeling. Give us the opportunity and protection, something of the protection, the illusion of protection if you like, and give us the concession of reservation of seats on the basis of the population. They have further said, 'give us if you will by such distribution of Provinces on the lines of your Congress distribution which will make, among other provinces, Sindh as a separate province, that will give to Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Provinces which Amanullah His Afghan Majesty rules, the opportunity to develop brotherhood and freedom. Give it the right of those reforms which you enjoy, call it what you like, give it that opportunity of equal development for it is backward. Do not keep it backward'. Therefore the Mussalman proposals were that you should give joint electorates to the Mussalmans who abdicate their sheet-anchor—separate electorate. They have set us a lesson by foregoing separate electorates. They trust in you that by your practice and example if a joint electorate is agreed to, you will put them on equal terms. They have asked that Sindh may be separated. You will hear many arguments for and against it. I personally love Sindh, I have presided over the Sindh Provincial Conference, I have been a delegate of the Congress from Sindh and I have ties of affection to that beautiful country because of its music and traditions. I have always held that Sindh should be for its own evolution a separate province, because that is separated from the largest community in the Bombay Presidency. I am putting forward this not because the Muslim community wants it but because the Congress recognises the right of the distribution of provinces on linguistic basis. It is for the integrity and love of the people speaking the same language, following the same traditions and customs, that I am saying this.

You have also before you all the other clauses. I am not now going

to enter into any more details but I do beseech you, nay, even more, I venture to command you in the name of that freedom which you say you desire, give an earnest that you are ready for a small readjustment; the sacrifices that are necessary to-day are the sacrifice of your sentiments, if indeed you wish to reach the goal of independence. What is independence? What is freedom? Freedom is that which demands of you the uttermost sacrifice of life, property, liberty, sentiment and all things most precious and sacred. If you Hindus and Mussalmans will throw on Lord Birkenhead the insult that he has flung on India, you would throw back that arrogant falsehood of that American woman who has exploited your dissensions and weaknesses, that you are a slave race and that you have no right for Swaraj, and who for the sake of unity had dared to defy the most sacred conventions, traditions, ideals and birthright of the people. I ask you, Hindus and Mussalmans, no matter what it costs you, by giving up of your life-blood and certain of your cherished traditions and predilections. I beg of you to hold this as the Magna Charta of education of discipline, and of tolerances as the first step towards that unity that will lead you to that independence that you claim without which you as a Nation would be nowhere. Even if you would be reborn, revived and twice-born in a spiritual sense, freedom alone will give you the right and claim to independence, laying the foundation of Hindu-Muslim Unity which is the only guarantee of the liberty and freedom of this dying race. (Loud Cheers.)

Mr. Abul Kalam AZAD in seconding the resolution said in Urdu:—

Brother delegates.—The resolution placed before us is very important and everyone realises the fact that the passing of this resolution is an imperative necessity for the future well-being of India. I have been striving for unity for the last ten years but I have not achieved any success. It was in 1916 that the Muslim League came to an understanding that separate electorate should be introduced in the country. We have been working along that line; but now we have taken a step. By this step we are going to have joint electorate in the country. Hereafter the Mussalmans will not have separate electorate and I feel certain that this will settle the differences in the country and lead the country towards unity. You may find this step new. But there is no other solution. As regards separation of new provinces I want to lay my points clear before you. You know that the Congress has accepted the principle dividing the provinces on linguistic basis. It is a misfortune that under the present rule, the distribution of provinces is very imperfect. Several provinces speaking different languages are amalgamated together. But this is a mistake. Provinces must be divided on linguistic basis. The question of frontier provinces is analogous. There cannot be two opinions over the fact that those provinces also must share the reforms which other provinces enjoy.

The resolution that we are going to pass to-day in this Congress takes us very far from the days of 1916. We are going to remove the stumbling block to unity, viz., the separate electorate and attain national solidarity. There is no other easy solution for this knotty problem of the cow-slaughter and music before mosques.

Here Mr. Azad explained the resolution and went on to say that the present solution was not a final one. The time for solving the cow problem finally had not yet come. No settlement between us can be arrived at by fighting or threat and going to the courts of law. But the settlement can come only

by the declaration of the rights of each community by the other community. We must try to create the opportunity for such declaration. The Mussalmans have been given the right to kill cows wherever they like and the Hindus to carry procession and play music before the mosques; but the settlement can come only when both the communities leave off their fights and accustom themselves to respect each other's feelings.

Here a member objected to the clause "the Mussalmans have been given the right to kill cows wherever they like," and wanted that it must be clearly indicated at which places the cows may be sacrificed. Mr. Azad replying said that it was difficult to enumerate all the places of restriction and it will form a volume itself. Conditions differ in different places and it will handicap the work of unity. If one community cannot concede some rights to the other community, in that case a mere enumeration of names of places alone cannot solve it. These resolutions have been before the country for the last six months and very careful considerations have been given to them. I request you to pass this resolution unanimously.

Mr. Gauri Shankar MISRA, rising next, opposed the resolution. He said that the terms of the resolution were not consistent with the declaration of independence which the Congress made only yesterday. He did not suppose that it was a resolution which was meant to be negatived and nullified by a resolution full of communalism. This resolution talked of Hindu-Moslem unity. True, they all needed communal unity to facilitate complete national independence. But was this resolution going to help them in any way at all? To the speaker, it was nothing but one stinking with the same spirit of communalism which that notorious Lucknow Pact brought about in this country. Let them have joint electorates by all means, but let there not be any reservation of seats for communities. As Mrs. Sarojini Naidu put it, he wished they realised they were all Indians first. The reservation of seats would not make them think so. If reservation of seats they must have, let them have it on the basis of such interests as peasant, labour and capital. Again, political rights had been incorporated in the resolution to satisfy the personal ends of the few educated Muslim agitators. Representation must be based on universal adult suffrage. A few Mussalmans, Hindus, Christians or others who possessed fortunately or unfortunately some property should not be made to have the sole right to decide the fate of the nations. He wanted every single individual born in the country to have the right of vote. This right must be included in the Swaraj Constitution. It was stated by some leaders that this resolution was meant to solve the question of communalism. No, it was not going to achieve anything like that. They had failed to take note of the fact that the pernicious Lucknow Pact to which such leaders as Lokamanya Tilak had given support had been the root cause of so much evil, denationalisation and demoralisation in the public life of this country. In the spirit in which they passed the resolution of independence yesterday, he would ask all his young friends and old to stand against communalism and reservation of seats.

Mr. Gauri Shankar Misra then proceeded to read his amendment.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar, General Secretary of the Congress, raised a point of order that no notice of the amendment had been received for moving it in the open Congress. Mr. Misra persisted in his attempt to move the amendment, when cries of order, order were raised from all sides.

The PRESIDENT had then to walk to the rostrum and prevail upon him to obey the chair. Addressing the Assembly, he said :

"Gentlemen, Pandit Misra has given his views to you. He sought my permission to oppose the resolution and I gave it. He has opposed it and now he wants to move an amendment. But no amendment has been received by me from him. Therefore, whilst giving him the fullest latitude to express his opinion against the resolution, I cannot really allow him at this last stage to move an amendment without receiving due notice of the same. I am glad that he has acceded to my wishes and has gone back without placing the amendment before you. Unless we work on some constitutional lines, work would be absolutely impossible here. I now call upon Pandit Jagat Narain to speak to you.

Pandit Jagat NARAIN wished to express his dissentient voice on certain clauses of the resolution. So far as part B was concerned, he said that the wording of the clause was sure to give rise to innumerable difficulties and serious complications and he felt certain that it would defeat the very object for which it was intended. It was explained to some of them that there was no question of the admission of the right of Mahomedans or Hindus in this matter. The mover stated that in the rights claimed by both the communities both of them had acquiesced. He was afraid there was an ambiguity which would lead the Moslems to kill cows wherever they chose. He considered that it would lead to a number of interpretations wherein one community wanted to snatch away as much as possible from another community. The resolution was in his opinion most unhappily worded. He knew that in this matter the names of Mahatma Gandhi, Pt. Malaviya and Dr. Munjee were also mentioned and it was said that they had acquiesced in this resolution. He had talked to friends who sat in the Subjects Committee the previous day and to several important members and so far as they had discussed it, the very spirit with which the resolution was drafted was cut out. He would tell them that neither Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Malaviya nor Dr. Munjee considered this resolution a desirable one. Even Moulana Abul Kalam Azad did not say that it was a happy resolution, and that if it were possible he would appeal to the Mussalmans to abolish the cow slaughter altogether. Having stated the circumstances under which a compromise was arrived at Delhi, he asked them what was the spirit that lay behind the anxiety to have the right acknowledged? Although some of the leading Mahomedans including the President had declared that the ultimate millennium should be the abolition of cow slaughter altogether, he knew that at the same time there was a pressing demand from the Mahomedan community that this right should be acknowledged. This acknowledgment he was sure would give trouble. If he would tell them of the conditions prevailing in U. P. and Bihar where cows were sacrificed, this resolution would not be accepted; but on the other hand there was going to be more bloodshed and riots over it. There have been a number of pacts and it was necessary that they should arrive at a right and lasting solution to help them in their difficulties instead of complicating matters. They went further and in the second clause said that they should have regard for each others feeling. If they prepared the ground like that, there would be no difficulty. He moved an amendment, but in deference to the wishes of some of the leaders he did not press it. There was an appeal in the third clause to both the communities not to have recourse to violence or

law in the matter of cow slaughter or music. The Muslim would say that he had a right to slaughter the cow wherever he liked. He certainly did not want that there should be recourse to violence or to law, but what was necessary was a clear understanding and some pressure, and once they opened the door for such an understanding, the result would be happy. He had not placed before the House any amendment, but he was grateful to the President for allowing him to express his feelings. He felt that the first and third clauses should have been removed and if only there was a genuine spirit behind that appeal to bring the troubles to a close, matters would have very much been for the better; but, on the other hand, he thought this would create dissensions.

Pandit Govind Ballabh PANT regretted the existence of the Hindu-Moslem trouble in this country which had eaten into the very vitals of their being. It had not only hampered their political progress, but in fact reduced them from the scale of civilised social beings to that not far removed from that to which the brutes belonged. The tension was in his opinion due to the spirit of distrust and hate which had taken hold of most of their people in the cities and towns. The resolution was in his opinion the best and most suitable arrangement which carried with it the largest amount of support from both the communities. It was admitted even by those who opposed the resolution that the system of separate electorates had brought about a state of demoralisation and political dismemberment. It was also responsible for accentuating their points of difference and for giving prominence to those who were of a fanatical spirit. They should therefore concentrate on all points of agreement in consequence of which he was sure the points of difference would slide into the background. The reservation of seats was not compatible with complete national independence. The compromise was accepted by the Hindus at a meeting of the All-India Committee with the full concurrence of Mr. Jayakar and Pandit Malaviya, both of whom had been the Presidents of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha. So the proposals carried with them the consent of both the communities. Referring to social and religious matters, the speaker said that the first part of the resolution laid down that certain rights were claimed by certain communities. It did not commit the Congress to that claim. It did not say that the Hindus accepted the claim that the Mussalmans made or vice versa.

Taking the second part of that resolution they saw how necessary it was to rely on the active support of the communities themselves for putting an end to the mischief which was largely due to intolerance than to anything else. If they wanted to stop cow-slaughter in this country they should secure the co-operation and goodwill of the brother communities residing in this land. The Moslem recognised that the Hindu sentiment in this matter was very deep-rooted. The question of Music had only recently come into prominence and it was the duty of Hindus to regulate the processions and so conduct the music without wounding the susceptibilities of the Mussalmans. What the resolution sought was to develop a spirit of tolerance through which alone the country could reach a higher state than it occupied to-day. If they resorted to law and violence, they retarded the progress of that sentiment which alone could lead them to the protection of the cow and the freedom of procession, music and prayer in the mosques.

Mr. PANDE of the United Provinces in opposing the resolution said that it was with the greatest reluctance he was going to do that. Especially

he took objection to the first part of the resolution because it was a political matter and Hindu-Muslim unity was a communal question, and the one should not be confused with the other. The resolution contained many things in whose favour nothing could be said. Firstly, the resolution was out of order in view of the fact that they had passed a resolution on the boycott of the Simon Commission and the resolution indirectly recommended what they wanted to say in regard to certain things. In 1916, when reforms were anticipated, the late Lokamanya Tilak and Mr. Jinnah tried to bring the two communities together but they made the mistake of confusing political ideas with communal points, which resulted in injury and harm to the growth of national unity. He was aware that they were now going to eliminate the great discord of separate electorate but still reservation of seats was there. As they were going to frame a Constitution, the question of joint or separate electorates and the reservation of seats could be discussed later on.

Sirdar Sardul Singh CAVESHIAR in supporting the resolution said that he admitted that the resolution was not a perfect one. Nobody claimed perfection for it. (Cheers). He pointed out that the resolution was an advance, but reservation of seats was a flaw in the joint electorates with reservation of seats, was far preferable than separate electorates as they were at present. The question of slaughter of cows and music before mosques could be solved only in two ways. One was by insisting on each other's rights and the other to leave it to the communities to appeal to their sense of honour. During the Khilafat agitation many Hindus ranged themselves by the side of the Mussalmans as brethren with the result that fewer cows were slaughtered at Delhi, but when Hindus wanted to assert their right larger number of cows were killed last year and Hindus now insisted upon carrying processions with music before mosques. The best way to solve these two questions was to leave the communities to appeal to each other.

Mr. J. M. SEN GUPTA rising amidst loud applause said that he proposed to meet the few arguments which were advanced by those who opposed the resolution. In the main, the opposition was directed to the second part of the resolution. It had been said that the resolution was not a perfect one, and that Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Dr. Moonje and others had not wholly approved of the first part. His friend from Berar, Pandit Jagat Narayanlal, had forgotten to tell them the additional fact that he also shared the view of Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Malaviya and Dr. Moonje that the resolution was not perfect. It was obvious that Mr. Lal had not been properly informed as he was not present at those private conversations among selected leaders of all provinces. He ought to have been informed having regard to the present situation and political conditions that there could not be a better solution for the immediate political work. (Cheers.) They were faced with this great difficulty that they had to go forward with their political work and this great problem had to be solved and the crisis faced. Were they going to wait and wait until they were absolutely killed and more communal tension developed in the country? They had been told that Mahatma Gandhi had not approved of the second part and in that sense nobody approved it but they had to evolve a cut and dried agreement upon which they could go on with their political work. Was not this resolution an improvement on the Calcutta settlement? In

the Calcutta settlement it was practically agreed that the Mahomedans had the right to slaughter cows both for the purpose of religious sacrifice and for food and Hindus had the right to take processions with music before mosques. In the present resolution there was no such admission as to the rights of the Mahomedans to slaughter cows or the Hindus to play music before mosques but nothing but truth was stated there. The purpose of the present resolution was not to prohibit Mahomedans from slaughtering cows because that would absolutely spoil the purpose of the resolution. The only way was to allow the respective communities to appeal to their brethren in the name of honour not to offend the susceptibilities of each other's rights. (Cheers). They had to give absolute freedom to each community without recognising their rights and assure them they would not oppose by violence or have recourse to law but depended on their honour as Hindus and Mussalmans not to offend each other, in the matter of cow-killing and music before mosques. They ought not to solve this question in a bureaucratic way (Cheers). He recalled the terrible days of April and May 1926 when riots took place in Calcutta. Hindus and Mahomedans were killed, mosques desecrated, temples attacked and the Hindus with the help of British bayonets and policemen took procession with music before mosques. He hung his head down with humiliation when his countrymen told him that the Hindus were victorious. It was not a victory but a defeat for the Hindus. The resolution wanted to prevent appeals to Government by one community against the other, as it was not the way to national freedom. During the Raj Rageswari festivals at Calcutta, the Government on one day patted the Hindus on their back and allowed them to take procession with music by the mosques and on the next day they patted the Mahomedans on the back and gave a slap to the Hindus by cancelling the licence at the last moment. That was the policy the English people would follow if they allowed their countrymen to have recourse either to violence or to the law officers. Therefore the resolution was drafted in that particular way. There was merit in the resolution that instead of trying to restrict the communities from exercising what they claimed to be their rights they had allowed them perfect freedom and depended upon the honour of the communities to see that they did not in the slightest way harm the feelings of other communities.

There was absolutely no controversy on the last part of the resolution relating to conversion and re-conversion. No one could take objection to the language of that resolution and so far as that part was concerned they had not heard any objection raised. Joint electorates and re-distribution of provinces on a linguistic basis was the only way to help them to go forward to their political work. If they should go forward they should accept this resolution absolutely unanimously if not by a great majority, so that they could that day give a proper answer to the insolent challenge of Lord Birkenhead and the British Government.

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI in supporting the resolution in a Tamil speech said that it contained no provisions which were harmful to either community. The differences that had arisen between the two great communities in this country were due to the pernicious system of separate electorates which were brought into being by the Lucknow Pact and if they were anxious that the resolutions on Independence and the boycott of the Statutory Commission which they passed almost by overwhelming majorities were to be given effect to, they

should first secure unity between the two communities and this resolution was only a first step in that direction. Their enemies were watching how they settled their communal differences and it was their duty to pass this resolution and thereby answer the insolent challenge of Lord Birkenhead and company by taking a forward move on the strength of this resolution.

Mr. CHOITRAM of Sindh opposing the resolution regarding the separation of Sindh from Bombay said :—First of all I want to tell you what is the genesis of this resolution. Some friends wanted that representations in the councils must be based on population basis and this brought about the idea of separation of Sindh. I say that this idea is against the feeling of nationalism. If you want to effect the separation of a province you ought not to do it because one community or other wants it, but you must consider the material progress that is to come out of such separation.

It has been said that Baluchistan must be made a province by itself. Let me tell you that the population of Baluchistan is only about four lakhs. If you create a tract of land populated by four lakhs of people into a province how many provinces will you have to create even out of a single presidency like Bombay. This kind of separation will increase the expenditure of the province enormously. This our Hindu friends who support the resolution do not consider. The Majority of the Hindus in Sindh are opposed to separation and if you want to maintain peace and unity between the two communities you must not pass this resolution. This will encourage the feeling of provincialism. I suggest that this resolution be referred to the committee that is to be constituted for drafting the future constitution of India.

Pandit Madan Mohan MALAVIYA, speaking in Hindi, said :—You have heard enough about this resolution. I will tell you one or two words. This is to settle the differences and stop the quarrels and move on the path of Swaraj together. The separate electorates have been omitted. I agree with Mr. Misra and I want that reservation of seats should not be done. We will go as far as possible together and settle our differences whenever they arise later. The Hindus and Muslims should agree to elect one representative to the legislature. Whatever community the members may belong to, Hindu, Muslim, Parsi or Anglo-Indian, he would think that he has to work for the cause of the country.

The resolution goes on to say that the administration of justice should be done in N. W. F. Provinces as it is done in other provinces. The resolution dealing with the division of provinces on linguistic basis simply says that the provinces may be divided only if the people want that a separation would be for the financial and economic prosperity of the country. This Congress does not object to division in that case.

About the Hindu-Muslim unity, Gandhiji has said that Hindus should refrain from playing music before mosques and Muslims from killing cows. The Muslims say they have a right to kill cows. The history of thousands of years says that the Hindus feel pained at the sacrifice of cows. The King of Kashmir passed laws punishing those who killed cows. Babar also wrote so in his will. Till the time of Akbar it continued. But ever since the British people came here the cow slaughter has become very great. And the Muslims should respect the feelings of the Hindus in the matter of cow-killing and the Hindus also must respect the feeling of the Muslims in the question of music before mosques. If these things are considered, the cow-



killing will be stopped and then the Hindu-Muslim fights. The Muslims want that they should not be disturbed at the time of the congregational prayer. The Hindus also must concede this.

Resort to violence and law courts to stop either cow-slaughter or music before mosques must be stopped and this resolution is just a step towards Hindu-Muslim unity. Law courts do not really help us, but they simply try to foster strained relations by helping the two communities alternatively.

Ever since the reforms, these quarrels are magnified by some who want to say that we are quarrelling amongst ourselves and they are not fit for Swaraj. We should not be carried away by petty differences.

We must look to that time when our steamers manned by our men will be sailing in the Indian Ocean flying our own flag. We want that we should have our own army commanded by our commanders and generals. We want that the lucrative Civil Service should not have recruits from a far-off country. We want that in trade, in politics, in navy, in army and in everything, there should be Indians. This can be done not by one community but by all communities together. Dr. Ansari may be the commander-in-chief. Pt. Madan Mohan may be in charge of Education. There will be love and peace in the country. The Hindus and Muslims are the followers of one God. They are the children of one mother, India. A handful of Englishmen coming from 6,000 miles away rule over us. Cleanse yourself of this shame.

The English Government is not strong enough to govern us even for a month if the Hindus, Muslims, Anglo-Indians all together should feel that there is one God and that there is one Mother India.

Mr. S. Srinivasa IYENGAR made an equally passionate appeal to his hearers to adopt the resolution, which, he said, had been arrived at after a good deal of discussion among the leaders, Hindu and Muslim. The Congress must indeed be grateful to the two great men who had collaborated to make the Madras session of the Congress a memorable one—Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya—and who had made it possible for getting over the difficulties which were created by the Calcutta resolution of the All-India Congress Committee. Of these difficulties it must be said to the credit of Gandhiji that he with his deep insight into human nature was able to find a way out. The speaker was supremely glad that the Gandhi resolution had now been consummated by those who could deliver the goods to the Muslim community except Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. The Muslim community, therefore, were equally thankful to him as Hindus. And just as to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, thanks were due to Muslim leaders. He could not in this connection omit the name of Mr. Manomed Ali Jinnah, Dr. Ansari, the Ali Brothers, and Mr. Abul Kalam Azad who had laboured hard in arriving at this settlement. What was it that the British Government had been prating about? It was not holding India by their arms, by their navy or their steel-frame but by India's own communal dissensions. The moment these dissensions were put an end to, the steel-frame of Lloyd George evaporated. He was sure that neither the independence resolution that they passed nor that relating to the boycott of the Simon Commission nor any resolution that they might pass thereafter, would be comparable at all to the resolution which had been moved by one who had devoted her whole life to Hindu-Muslim unity. Mrs. Naidu's life mission was fulfilled to-day and the speaker's two years'

mission was also fulfilled to-day. Without Hindu-Muslim unity, as he had been stating repeatedly, nothing was possible and after what Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya had said they must be satisfied with the two clauses, they must have no hesitation to pass the resolution without any dissentient voice.

One final word he would tell them. They were now emerging from a period of rank communalism to perfect nationalism through the intermediary territory of imperfect nationalism. The proposition before them was leading them up to perfect nationalism. The reservation of seats was no obstacle at all. Experience had shown that it did not stand in the way of nationalism. It was simply a transitory provision. They must take this resolution really as the beginning of Hindu-Muslim unity. It was a very substantial foundation upon which they could rear the magnificent edifice of Swaraj. No talk of Swaraj was possible without this resolution. They must not view the different parts separately but take them as a whole, one part depending upon another. Let them without further discussion, without a single dissentient voice adopt it and shame the British bureaucracy and the Anglo-Indian Press. The real answer to the Simon Commission was not its boycott, not even the independence resolution but the unanimous passing in this momentous session of the Congress of the Hindu-Muslim unity resolution without altering a word, a single comma, or a semi-colon.

Moulana MAHOMED ALI then delivered a stirring message which was loudly cheered. He said :

Let us thank God that Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Baldwin were induced to send the Simon Commission to India. That has at last aroused us and now we realise that we cannot trust the British Government, whether it is a Tory Government or Labour Government, and we can only trust each other. Hindus trust Mussalmans and Musalmans trust Hindus (cheers) and that is contained in this resolution. When I was coming to Madras in 1921, since when I have not come, I was stopped at Waltair and the Collector of Vizagapatam demanded security from me to keep the peace and be of good behaviour (laughter). I told him it was for me to demand security from him (cheers), to be of good behaviour (laughter) and as for keeping the peace, I said : "Are you not ashamed with your hands dripping in the blood of Jallianwalla Bagh to demand from me, a non-violent man the pledge, the security to keep peace in India ?"

Moulana Shaukat Ali called out from the dais that the speaker was not confining himself to the Hindu-Muslim question. Moulana Mahomed Ali in his humorous way said :—" My brother has a big bulk, but has very little patience. Let him keep his breath for mounting up Marble Hall steps and let me use my breath for coming to my point". Continuing, the Moulana said :—

Before this resolution we were asking Government every day to demand security from Hindus and the Hindus were asking Government to demand security from Mussalmans to keep the peace and be of good behaviour, but now we have stopped that and we begin a new era in which we give security to each other only to be of good behaviour. (Hear, hear and cheers). This is the essence of the resolution both on the political and religious side. On the political side we say, this is the golden rule—do unto others what you wish others do unto you, and we give the power to do good to each other or to do evil unto each other. On the religious side, too, we do not ask Government now to bring out their Police Commissioners to take out Hindu processions and to prevent music before mosques, nor do

we ask Government to send out armoured cars to be allowed to take cows to slaughter-houses. Now our processions will be led by the highest Police Commissioner of the world—by our own conscience, by our own sense of nobility, by our own sense of justice and generosity. (Cheers).

The last word for which I have specially come here, and for other things. I have heard to-day a most marvellous speech—I refer to the speech of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. After this speech I am reminded of what happened in Egypt when the British Government had roused communal passions but they failed, because the Mussalmans who constituted 95 per cent of the population treated the Christians in a manner that when the Milner Commission came and Lord Milner or his colleagues went up to speak to any Christian, he said, "I cannot answer you. You ask my name? I do not know my name. Go to Syed Zaghlul Pasha, he will tell you my name." In the same way, I say, if Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya acts in the spirit of his wonderful speech of to-day when Earl Winterton tells that he stands as the champion of minorities we shall tell him that it is a lie and that the champion of the minorities is Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. That is all that I have to say. I pledge myself to put my confidence in Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. I will not betray him and I feel sure he will not betray me.

After the resolution was carried unanimously, the whole assembly standing and drowned in shouts of Alla-ho-Akbar, Vaude Mataram and Mahatma Gandhi-ki-jai, the President spoke as follows :—

To-day you have not only laid the foundation of a free India, but you may consider that you are well on the way to win it. (Hear, hear and cheers) A friend has said about giving up cow-slaughter by the Moslems. I have given it up long long ago (hear, hear and cheers) and those Moslems who are present here, I know, I can say that they have also all given up cow flesh a long long time ago. It is our earnest desire that the Moslems of India would voluntarily out of regard for the feelings and sentiments of Hindus will give up cow-sacrifice and cow-slaughter for ever.

The Congress then adjourned at 4-30 p.m. but re-assembled an hour later at 5-30 p.m.

### 15.—Reform in Indian States.

The first resolution moved by Mr. Manilal Kothari an Indian States was as follows :—

"This Congress is emphatically of opinion that in the interests of both the Rulers and the people of Indian States they should establish representative institutions and responsible Government in their States at an early date."

In doing so the mover said that a resolution of this character was for the first time brought before this House. Both in the Bombay Conference held under the presidency of Mr. Ramachandra Rao and in the Indian States Subjects Conference held under the presidency of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar resolutions were adopted demanding full responsible government in the Indian States through representative institutions under the aegis of the Rulers. In passing the resolution put before them they in India would be extending their sympathy and support to the demands of seven crores of Indian India. From his intimate knowledge and experience of the state of things obtaining in some of the Indian States he could say that seven crores of Indian India with some exception were suffering under hardships and humiliations and even under terrors and tyrannies. Personal rule of the Chief had been

the bane not only of the people but also the Princes. It had made them autocrats and the British Government had taken advantage of this to make them puppets. The most elementary and natural rights of citizenship were denied to them and they had no right to a free press or free association. In some States there was not even security of person and property and they could not control the budget. The speaker then dwelt at length on the relations of the Political Department with the Chiefs which resulted in the latter having lost their position and prestige. This state of things was due to the utter helplessness of the people. Very few people were articulate and he deplored that the kind of education imparted to Rajkumars had denationalised them.

It was both in the interests of the Princes and the people that this demand should be conceded. They had no designs against the Princes themselves and would allow them to continue provided they were good and God-fearing and made themselves humble servants of the people like H. M. the King of Afghanistan. They wanted their Rulers to be as so many ideal Rulers of ancient times and then the States would have Swaraj if they were genuine servants.

Mr. SATYAMURTI in seconding the resolution said :

This session of the Congress has been epoch-making in more senses than one and the resolution which I have the honour of seconding will also go down in the history of the Congress as an epoch in its onward march in the fight for the freedom of the motherland. Nearly one-third of British India which is known as Indian States is in the grip of the Indian Rulers and so far the Indian National Congress has not thought it its duty or right to interfere in what are known as the internal affairs of the States. Even this resolution is no direct interference in the internal affairs of those Indian States but for the first time in the history of the Congress this great and august Assembly speaking on behalf of the Indian Nation appeals to the Indian Rulers and the Indian people that in their mutual interests they ought to establish representative and responsible government in the States themselves.

I would like to say a word to the Rulers and with all humility, whatever their salutes may be, whatever the G. C. B.'s and G. C. I. E.'s and G. C. S. I.'s they get, there is no doubt whatever that so far as slavery is concerned they and we are equally slaves of the British Government. But there is one difference. Our chains are made of iron, their chains are made of gold but in both cases they are chains. But apart from history the parting kick administered by Lord Reading to H. E. H. the Nizam as to the relative position of the Nizam and his suzerain power, the treatment meted out to the Maharajas of Nabha and Bharatpur and the mandatory language used by more than one Viceroy to the Indian States ought to make these people realise that they are merely puppets, whose strings are being pulled from behind the screens by the British Resident or Political Agent at their Courts. I also want them to remember that in the modern wave of democracy personal power ought to go the way autocratic personal power has gone. The Czar of All the Russians is no more. The Kaiser is no more. The King of England is there because he is King only in name and not in fact. (Cheers). Therefore these Maharajas, Rajas and Nawabs must realise that their only future and their only security rest upon the goodwill and affection of the people. I therefore ask them in all humility to establish Swaraj or full responsible government in

their own Indian States in order that they may have an honoured and honourable place for themselves in the future free and self-governing India.

Secondly I appeal by means of this resolution to the people of the States themselves not any longer to be dumb driven cattle but to take a lesson from the leaves of the Indian National Congress and go forth and fight by all constitutional and legitimate means for their own rights as men in their States. This resolution is a symbol of comradeship and of support in the struggle which they may have to go through in the Indian States. May I in your behalf and mine assure our fellow slaves in these Indian States, the blood of our blood, that we shall no longer watch them carry on an unequal struggle in their own States for Swaraj but that they would find us comrades in arms in their struggle.

The last point I desire to make is that to-day in many Indian States there is not even the rule of Law, let alone representative or responsible government. There is no clear demarcation between the private purse of the chief and the public revenues of the State. The courts are mere creatures of mere executive laws which are thrown aside by the whims or caprices of the Ruler or his favourites. If time is allowed I can give many instances of the freaks of the Rulers. All of you must have heard and some of you must have personally known these Rulers who with rare exceptions are petty tyrants and they ought to be told that they will have a future, if they put a curb voluntarily on their irresponsible power and bring themselves into line with constitutional monarchs wherever they exist in the world. So far as the Indian National Congress is concerned I am sure the Rulers will realise that they will find the leaders of the Indian people at least as friendly, to them as the Govt. of India or the British Govt. if not more friendly. The Rulers have nothing to fear from us and as the subject of an Indian State myself I am profoundly thankful to you that you have realised our sad plight and have come to our rescue. In return for that gesture we undertake on our behalf that we shall be no parties to the manoeuvre which I know the British Government will make in order to fight with the Indian Princes on their side against Swaraj for India. We in the Indian States are not going to stand any such nonsense. These are the main arguments which I desire to advance in favour of the proposition that this Congress should demand that Indian States should adopt complete Responsible Government. I appeal to you to pass this resolution unanimously so that hereafter the subjects of the Indian States will find in the Indian National Congress the mother of their high hopes and aspirations even as we in British India find our own high hopes and aspirations. I have great pleasure in seconding the resolution and commending it to your acceptance. (Loud applause.)

The resolution was carried unanimously.

#### 16.—Boycott of British Goods.

Mr. Rajkumar CHAKRAVARTHI of Bengal next moved the following resolution:—

"This Congress while reaffirming the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee on the boycott of British goods, resolves that, with a view to make such boycott effective, Provincial Congress Committees be called upon to organise boycott of selected British goods having regard to the conditions of each province."

In doing so he said that the partition of Bengal was the cause of a great agitation throughout India as a result of which a settled fact became un-

settled. If anybody entertained any doubt about the success of the present boycott agitation let him take a lesson from the historic years of 1905 and afterwards. The boycott of the British goods was necessary as an effective answer to the policy of economic exploitation which the British Government had been systematically following in this country for the last 150 years. It was also an answer to the British Government for the appointment of the Parliamentary Commission which was really a calculated affront to India and her peoples and which took away the right of self-determination which was their birthright; also to the ruthless policy of lawless law followed by the British bureaucracy in this country for the creation of many repressive measures like the Ordinance Act of 1925 and Regulation III of 1818; also to the illegal and unjust detention of more than a hundred Bengal Detenus rotting in different parts of the country, some behind the ironbars of the prison-house and others in the far-off jungle lands in the deltas of Bengal. The resolution was only a corollary to the resolution on independence already adopted. India must be a self-sufficient and self-contained country, independent of all foreign and British goods as far as possible. They were all anxious for the attainment of self-government at an early date. After all the British had vested interests and they would like that the Indians should continue for ever as hewers of wood and drawers of water. Unless Indians brought some sort of pressure upon the Government of a Nation of shopkeepers they would not part with their vested interests. The most effective way of bringing about that end was economic boycott. They had already passed a resolution regarding the boycott of the Statutory Commission. The two boycotts must go together and for that great sacrifice was needed on the part of patriotic Indians. No nation ever attained self-government without sacrifice of some sort. The boycott of British goods was one of the means to achieve the ultimate end—Swaraj. With those words he commended the resolution.

Mr. Abdul Hameed KHAN, in seconding the resolution, said that the Congress had resolved to declare independence as its goal. But that freedom would be only a partial freedom unless and until they resolved to free their motherland communally also. Economic freedom could be attained by the boycott of British goods in a practical manner. If at the beginning the boycotted foreign goods were unnecessary and luxurious and if at the same time they encouraged Indian industries and articles manufactured in India necessary for their use, they could gradually boycott foreign goods completely including goods from Britain. Unfortunately the various Provincial Congress Committees had not given the matter the attention that it deserved and strenuous propaganda had not been carried in the various provinces for the boycott of particular goods. The British Government had been heaping insult after insult upon his countrymen by keeping them in jails without trial and by sending out the Simon Commission without taking India into their confidence and giving them a chance to have their say in the deliberations of the commission. Because of this and because of the necessity to maintain their position as self-respecting people and as patriots who loved their country, the boycott of British goods was necessary. India wanted political and economic independence. Further every self-respecting nation should encourage its own industry. Let them look at Britain, Germany, America and Japan which imposed tariff duties to keep out goods manufactured in other countries. Unless the average Britisher was made to feel the

serious situation in India and unless his pocket was touched he would not realise that India did not want any longer to be under bondage.

Miss Bandopadhyaya of Bengal in supporting the resolution said that a nation proud of her power of might ruled over a subject nation in such a manner as to disregard humanitarian considerations introducing lawlessness in the name of law and order, heaping insult on insult, disgrace upon disgrace. A subject nation had no other alternative than to retaliate with a mighty blow crumbling down the pride of the rulers to dust. The boycott of British goods was the only manner of retaliation which India could adopt against England.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

#### Friends' Messages.

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar then announced that letters and messages of sympathy had been received from Lala Harikishen Lal of Lahore, Maharaja of Mahmudabad (Lucknow), Mahomed Jamaitullah (Punjab), Messrs. Ghose, George Lansbury, Saklatwala, Barucha and Mahomed Yacoub.

At the request of the audience the following message from Mr. Saklatwala was read :

#### MR. SAKLATWALA'S MESSAGE.

Dear comrades.—The might of tyrants holds me away from my countrymen. Many have tried this trick before, to save their ill-gotten Empires but no one yet has really succeeded.

Yes, I can be shunned and held in exile only if you, my countrymen and countrywomen, shut your hearts against me and turn a deaf ear to my pleadings. If you receive me in your hearts, if you incorporate my suggestion in your deliberations at this critical juncture of our struggle for our freedom and in the cause of world peace I am as much in your midst as any other delegate.

I honestly hold the view that the human being who stands reconciled to an imperialist bondage, who basks in the sunshine of foreign rule is responsible for many more evils in the world at large, than merely for the degradation of his own country and his own people.

British rule in India means our peoples' perpetual starvation, ignorance, physical deterioration and social backwardness. British rule in India means a standing curb on Egypt, Iraq, Prussia and Afghanistan.

British rule in India means an over-powering militarism by British that compels the rest of the world to weigh itself down under the cursed burden of armaments.

British rule in India means the continual menace to the wages, to the work, and the live standard of the British masses, and an actual frustration of their Trade Union Rights and Socialist aims.

British rule in India means a constant unseen war upon the rapid development of the masses in all the nations of Europe and America.

If, by a magic touch, the British Empire were to be Sovietised and the conquered races under her control set free, there would be not only real peace and prosperity for the liberated races, but there would be a sudden jump in the economic, social, political and cultural development of the human race.

As a friend of Great Britain, as an equal brother of the British, as of the Indian worker and peasant, I devote myself and appeal to all of you to devote yourselves to the great task of getting Britain to abandon Imperialism once and for ever.

Pray, do not be led into merely raising protests against this act and that act and a hundred and one of the day to day grievances of a sorely tried people. What else is Imperialism but a crushing mill? The prince and peasant must fall victims by turns, as you see a Nabha or a Nizam can be sacrificed to it as easily as the poorest of Akalis or Moplahs. Imperial prisons exempt no castes

or religions when a spirited person makes a stand; a Subash Bose, a Maulana Mahomed Ali, a Sardar Karak Singh, a Manchershaw Awari are all hateful to imperialist arrogance and latterly you must have seen that when at last—thanks to the teaching of the communist movement—British boys like Allison or Spratt stand up for the rights of a people to be free the Imperialist ruler forgets the white man's prestige and is ready to wreck vengeance upon his own 'jat bhai'.

Let us rise above wailing over pain endured by individual sufferers.

British Imperialism is a destined factor in the rise and fall of modern capitalism; it was conceived as an economic power and it has grown up to be an economic evil.

We who have led in the van with a purely political concentration have proved too feeble for the task. Awaken our working masses, organise our teeming peasants, take these myriads of India's toiling children right inside our national organisation by direct affiliation, discipline them within their Trade Unions and within an All-India Workers' and Peasants' Party for direct economic passive resistance that can dry up the sources of imperial power and prosperity.

Organise our youths of both sexes from the age of 10 into a large All-India Young Comrades' League, and without scorn for their youthfulness affiliate them also with the Congress.

Now is the time for a genuine nation-wide boycott movement, not of a picturesque political kind but of an economic character that will everlastingly impress upon the ruling caste that a Royal Commission which goes out to sow fresh power may bring back a harvest of disaster. If the British Labour Party have declined to respect the declared wishes of India's representatives and the Indian Trade Union Congress and have become partners in the Imperial game of the capitalist rulers of the British Empire the responsibility is theirs of making the workers of Britain share in the penalties of a severe economic boycott. Do let me appeal to you to avoid the mistakes of the past and to take a more courageous and scientific line of action.

In the first place do not try to declare a boycott of all foreign goods, but let us be honest and voluntarily avoid contact with British goods. To keep out of India all foreign goods in the present stage of our development is impracticable in national economies. But it is impossible to demand and obtain foreign goods from other nations to substitute goods of British origin at least as long as the representatives of British labour insist upon sitting on this Royal Commission. Then again do not fail to enlist the assistance of the working class as by mere dependence upon its commercial and educated section no nation carries its ideals to success. Indian dock-workers, transport workers, carters, clerks and all should refuse all contact with goods of British origin. When you have done all this you have taken action only against a part of commercial imperialism. One of the main objects of Imperialism is transplantation of British interests into India, and in the economic and unjust enrichment of British capitalist these transplanted activities play a bigger part than exports of goods from Britain. Any scientific ostracism of the interests of British capitalism is impossible unless effective measures are adopted to refuse contact with the economic interests of British capitalist representatives in India. Let Imperialism take care of itself politically or legislatively, it has no right to demand economic co-operation from the conquered. We are legally and constitutionally entitled to refuse commercial and industrial co-operation and hospitality to those who are only out to abuse both.

Let the present Indian National Congress concentrate itself on large and fundamental issues instead of discussing details of every-day grievances. Appoint your All-India Congress Committee on a specially larger scale so that men and women of talent and power can function unceasingly in towns, taluks, and villages and can carry out your national schemes with the full support and co-operation of our workers and peasants.

Let me pray you in the end not to minimise the difficulty of our task; the problem is not merely an Indian problem, not a problem of foreign ministers or officials ruling India, it is a world problem, it is the problem of freeing all



humanity from a militarist civilisation that it may build a new era of genuine equality, fraternity and liberty. Do not therefore conclude your sittings without adopting adequate measures and without creating necessary machinery for your co-operation with the workers of all nationalities who are struggling to attain the same end.

With my heartiest good wishes and trusting in your efforts to get me back in your midst as soon as possible despite the cunning and stupid attempts to exile me, I remain, yours, Saklatvala.

### 17. — Swaraj Constitution.

Mr. Jamnadas M. MEHTA next moved the following resolution :

"Having regard to the general desire of all political parties in the country to unite together in settling a Swaraj constitution and having considered the various drafts submitted to it and the various suggestions received in reply to the Working Committee's circular, this Congress authorises the Working Committee, which shall have power to co-opt, to confer with similar committees to be appointed by other organisations political, labour, commercial and communal, in the country and to draft a Swaraj Constitution for India, on the basis of a declaration of rights and to place the same for consideration and approval before a special convention to be convened in Delhi not later than March consisting of the All-India Congress Committee and the leaders and representatives of the other organisations above mentioned and elected members of the Central and Provincial legislatures."

In moving the resolution he said that the question of drafting the Swaraj Constitution should not be left to the Simon Commission or to any creature of the British Parliament because at present there was no greater enemy to the progress and peace of the world than England as could be seen from the condition of things in India and elsewhere. After the war England was the only country which remained the most autocratic and the most grasping country in the world. Britain under the guise of bringing peace wanted to exploit innocent people. There were other countries who acted like Britain. They professed to be Christians, they prayed on their knees on Sundays and preyed on their neighbours on the rest of the days. The British Government were ignorant of the condition of things in India. Even the under-Secretary of State for India did not know the real condition of things in India for he was reported to have said that the drafting of the constitution should not be left to the politically-minded people representing 20 lakhs of votes. Every-body who knew anything of the Indian constitution knew very well that it was not 20 lakhs of votes but 6 millions. Then again he was reported to have stated that the Indians should not be allowed to have a hand in the drafting of the constitution because in South India there was so much bitterness between the Mahomedans and the Hindus. They were all aware that such a bitterness existed only in Northern India. Perhaps Earl Winterton did not know what was Southern India and what was Northern India. Years ago a countryman of Earl Winterton wrote a novel in which he stated that Bombay was situated in the Bay of Bengal. Earl Winterton was certainly an improvement on that novelist. After referring to other instances of the ignorance of Earl Winterton of the real condition of things in India, he said that the Congress having passed the independence resolution it must now proceed to draft a Swaraj Constitution. Such a constitution could be decided upon by the deliberations of a committee representing the various political parties in the country—Liberals, Moderates, Muslim Leagues, etc. The draft constitution should be presented to the country for the political education of the masses and the classes. If England

had some element of wisdom she would take the last chance of improving the situation.

Dr. Varadarajulu NAIDU in seconding the resolution said that the British Government had taken advantage of the existing dissensions in the country to advance the date of the appointment of the Commission. But they had by their resolutions during the past two days shown clearly that there was absolutely no difference between them in regard to their political demands. They had before them a number of Swaraj Constitutions prepared by leaders, and it was necessary that they should be examined by the Working Committee and a Swaraj scheme prepared in conformity with the resolution passed yesterday by the Congress that their goal was complete national independence.

After some more speeches the resolution was declared carried, two voting against it.

#### 18.—Delegate's Fee.:

Mr. A. Rangaswami IYENGER, General Secretary of the Congress, moved that in Article 11 dealing with delegate's fee, Rs. 5 be substituted for rupee one. The motion was put and lost.

#### 19.—Member's Subscription.

Mr. A. Rangaswami IYENGAR next moved that the annual subscription of every member of the All-India Congress Committee be Rs. 10 and said that the very attenuated condition of the Congress funds was the reason for fixing the annual subscription of an A. I. C. C. member at Rs. 10.

The resolution was carried.

#### 20 & 21.—Other Resolutions.

The President, in concluding the session, spoke as follows :—

Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.—Now I have got to place before you a few formal resolutions. The first one is that relating to the retiring Secretary. The resolution reads thus :—

"This Congress places on record its great appreciation of the valuable services rendered by Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar and Mr. V. J. Patel, as the General Secretaries for 1927." I am sure you will all carry this unanimously. I hope there is no opposition to this.

Now the next resolution relates to office-bearers for the year 1928. "This Congress appoints the following office-bearers for the coming year : (1) Shuaib Quereshi, (2) Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru and (3) Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose as the General Secretaries. Then the two Treasures : (1) Jamnalal Bajal and (2) Reva Shanker Jagjivan Javeri." Now I hope you will also carry this resolution unanimously.

The resolutions were put to vote and carried amidst acclamation, there being not a single dissident.

#### 22.—Venue of the Next Session.

The third resolution which I ought to place before you is that which relates to the venue of the next Congress. The resolution runs as follows :—

"This Congress resolves that its next session be held in Calcutta."

This was also carried unanimously amidst loud cheers and applause.

#### Dr. Ansari's Concluding Speech.

The President, Dr. Ansari, in conclusion, said :—"Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—Before this memorable session of the 42nd Indian

National Congress is closed, I wish to say a few words for the great consideration, for the great assistance and for the wonderful warmth of reception which Madras and my brother delegates have given me. Gentlemen, I wish to remind you that in this session you have carried through some very important resolutions. The most important one to my mind related to the Hindu-Muslim relations. I have already told you that you have not only laid the foundation of Swaraj, but you have almost won it. The next important resolution that you have carried relates to the boycott of the Simon Commission. I am sure if we all work unitedly, we shall not only gain our immediate objective but we shall be very near our goal of attaining Swaraj. The third important resolution that you have carried—just passed—is that which relates to the Constitution. You have not only got to boycott this Simon Commission but you have got to prepare the constitution and you have to place that constitution for your future guidance and for the information of the entire world including the British nation—that is your ideal and that is what you want.

Gentlemen, you would see that in the next year you have got to do very strenuous work, very hard work if you really wish to succeed. It is not sufficient that we should pass resolutions and then forget all about them when we go back home and to our various provinces. I would appeal to you all, gentlemen, that when you leave Madras or rather when you leave this pandal you will vow that these resolutions which you have carried you are going not only to carry but you are going to act up to them and going to make a success of them.

Gentlemen, before I close, I wish to say a few words of gratitude to Mr. Muthuranga Mudaliar, the Chairman of the Reception Committee and to the Secretaries and all his co-workers who have worked so hard and who have really made this Congress so very successful, so very comfortable and so wonderfully beautiful. I wish also to thank Mr. Rajaram Pandya, Captain of the volunteers. I wish to thank his assistants, namely, the Vice-Captains, and above all, I wish to thank most cordially the rank and file of the volunteer brethren. It is really these young men who are the hopes of the country. It is really they who will bear the brunt and I know that these young men had been working hard day and night. They have really withstood the burden of the work. I owe a very deep debt of gratitude to them for having so loyally, so steadfastly, so generously given their time and labour in the service of their country. (Loud applause and cheers.)

Before I close I will only say one word about your great citizen, I mean Srijiut S. Srinivasa Iyengar. I know he is the pivot on which the whole system in this city, at least relating to the political life of this province resolves. But for his wonderful personality I know half the work would not be done. I wish to thank him on your behalf and on my behalf and I pray that many years would be given him to serve his Motherland in the way in which he had been doing.

Before I close, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to appeal to you for the cause which I am sure you would most liberally support and that is the Bengal Detenus Fund. Gentlemen, I have already told you in my address the deplorable condition in which they are rotting away in their exile and internment. I appeal to you as patriots, as Indians, to help those brothers of yours who are suffering to-day only because they love their motherland too dearly.

And before I close I wish to thank Mrs. Lakshmipathi and Mrs. Kamaladevi Chatopadhaya and also the rank and file of the Lady Volunteers. Gentlemen, it is only when our women take to come out and help us in the cause of the Motherland that India will become absolutely irresistible.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I do not wish to delay any longer and I want to thank you cordially for your generous hospitality and for the warmth with which you have always received me. It would be one of the most cherished moments of my life and I shall always remember Madras for its hospitality and its generosity. (Loud and continued applause.)

#### Vote of Thanks.

Mr. Muthuranga Mudaliar, the Chairman of the Reception Committee then rose to express his vote of thanks in the following words:

Fellow-delegates and friends:—While welcoming you on the opening day of this session I congratulated you on the choice of the President. I am now happy to say that your expectations and aims have been amply justified in the last two or three days. You have seen how tactfully, how ably, in what a businesslike manner our President has conducted the deliberations of our assembly. I am sure that this year which has begun well with this momentous session of the Congress under the distinguished leadership of our President will be a memorable year in the history of our struggle for freedom. I shall not be justified in making a long speech in this businesslike session. On behalf of the Reception Committee I propose a hearty vote of thanks to our President, to the delegates and distinguished leaders who have made it convenient to attend the Congress and help us in our deliberations. I am sure that amongst the many important resolutions that we have passed in this session we may congratulate ourselves that we have unanimously passed three most important resolutions, the one on National Independence, the second on the Boycott of the Simon Commission and the third on the Hindu-Muslim Unity. In arriving at this conclusion I must congratulate our tried leaders, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mahatma Gandhi, Moulana Mahomed Ali and others. Friends, it is not enough that we have passed these resolutions. I hope you will carry this message with you when you go back from Madras and broadcast this message to every village in your province.

I have to confess that the Reception Committee has not done what all it ought to have done. I know our President in concluding this session has paid a great tribute to the work of the Reception Committee and my humble self. I may say at once that this spectacular part of the arrangement may be all very good. But I am conscious of our own imperfections and I am conscious that we have not done all that we ought to have done for the comforts of our delegates. We have no excuse for such a weakness. But now I appeal to my brother delegates and sisters to forgive us for our shortcomings. I would also propose a vote of thanks to all other parties who have responded to our invitation. I hope this would pave the way for the union of all the parties with a view to present a united front to our enemies. With these words I appeal to you, ladies and gentlemen, to carry this resolution of thanks with acclamation.

Thus ended the great and memorable session of the 42 Indian National Congress.

# The All-India Liberal Federation.

BOMBAY—27TH DECEMBER 1927.

## The Welcome Address.

The tenth session of the All-India National Liberal Federation opened at Bombay on the 27th December 1927 before a very large gathering of delegates and visitors.

Welcoming the Federation to the City of its birth, Sir Chimanlal SETALVAD said, to-day they were meeting under very exceptional circumstances. The whole country had been moved in a manner it had never been moved before and a feeling of solidarity and unity in upholding the national self-respect and national rights had exhibited itself in a marvellous manner. The announcement of the Statutory Commission had evoked throughout the country deep and universal dissatisfaction and people of all shades of political opinion had comprised their protest.

Sir Chimanlal strongly criticised the composition of the Commission and said that the Secretary of State for India must indeed have a desperate case to support when he was driven to arguing that the framers of the Government of India Act of 1919 had in their minds the appointment of a purely Parliamentary Commission although the Section as worded did not impose any such restriction.

Referring to the proposal to constitute committees of legislatures Sir Chimanlal uttered a note of warning against being carried away by suggestions and pious hopes of Labour Leaders or by the honeyed words used by the Prime Minister that Indians would be approached as friends and equals.

In the scheme there was nothing conceded to Indian legislatures, declared Sir Chimanlal, beyond what would be perfectly open to them to do without the scheme mentioning it. The legislatures or their committees had no more status and no more power than that of submitting their views like any other witness, which could be accepted or rejected. Further, all freedom which Sir John Simon and his colleagues could give would only be to liberalise the procedure as much as they could but not create equal status or confer equal rights on the committee of the Indian Legislature.

This being the real nature of the association offered to India in the work of determining her political future, Sir Chimanlal asked, could India with any self-respect agree to accept the position offered to her? It was for the Federation, speaking for the Liberal Party to give the answer but he suggested that it should be an emphatic negative. Their position was plain. The scheme as announced was unacceptable and they could not take any part in it. If fresh proposals or modifications were made they were prepared to consider them with an open mind. They had raised their voice in warning and the responsibility lay heavily on the Government. They had to make up their minds and the quicker they did it the better to retrace their steps and rectify the great blunder they had committed or to persist in their mistaken course and work an everlasting harm both to India and to England.

## Sir Sivaswami's Tribute to the President-Elect.

After the welcome address Sir Sivaswami Iyer, proposing Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to the chair, said it was only necessary to remind the gathering, not inform them, of the many great personal qualities and achievements as a public man of their President-elect. His public spirit, sterling independence of character and his quality of talking straight to the enemy at the gate made him the man they require at this juncture.

Sir M. V. JOSHI, seconding the proposal, thought the party could not get wiser guidance than from Sir Tej Bahadur who was the speaker's ideal of what a sturdy Liberal should be. By accepting him as the President they would show to the country that they had not deflected from Liberal and

constructional methods. The proposal having been duly supported by Messrs. Desai and Hridayanath Kunzru, Sir Tej Bahadur took the chair amidst cheers and delivered his address. The following is the text :—

### The Presidential Address.

In the course of his speech Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru discussed threadbare all the points of the coming Statutory Commission. At the outset he remarked that though they had declared their opinions on it on their own responsibility, it was for the Party now which had met together for the first time since the Viceregal announcement, to declare its opinion in its collective capacity. For nearly six months, he continued, before this historic commencement, speculation was rife as to its character and composition and the Anglo-Indian press and publicists with only two solitary exceptions predicted the absolute exclusion of Indians on its panel. It was surely remarkable that they should have some months ago, so vividly anticipated the decision of the Government. When surprise was expressed at what was supposed to be a premature disclosure of the names of the members, Lord Birkenhead had to confess that he had to take into confidence a large number of persons in England and invite their opinion. Whether similarly a large number of Europeans in India were also taken into confidence and whether their counsel was invited could be very well understood from the above circumstances. However, when this was going on behind the scene he, writing to the Press so far back as June last, gave a note of warning to the Government that an exclusively Parliamentary Commission with no Indian element could make no appeal to any section of the Indian opinion and would not carry with it Indian confidence and support.

### The Rubicon Crossed.

Continuing he said :—"During my recent visit to England—short as my stay was there—it became abundantly plain to me that the mind of government had already been made up; that India could not hope for any support for its viewpoint from the Conservatives of the Liberals and that, at any rate, so far as some of the Labour leaders were concerned they had placed serious limitations upon their liberty of action. The English Press could not or would not tolerate the expression of a different opinion on the subject and when in a leading article the 'Times' wrote that the personnel of the Statutory Commission must be exclusively British it left no room in my mind that the Rubicon had been crossed. The fiat had gone forth and it could no longer be revoked.

"It is impossible to believe that an all-wise and far-seeing government could not or would not anticipate the repercussions of such a policy on Indian mind. No doubt it reconciled itself to its decision in the hope and belief that the outburst of indignation and discontent in India would be a short-lived one, that the Swarajists were more interested in nursing grievances than in having them removed and that therefore they could easily be disposed of as the irreconcilables in Indian politics; that the Liberals would be amenable to "ipso facto" reasoning and persuasion; that at any cost they were not a serious factor in Indian politics; that the cleavage between the Hindus and the Mohammedans was so wide that even under the pressure of common grievance they could not join hands and, lastly, there were the depressed classes who were bound to raise their piteous cry for protection against the evil designs of the more powerful upper classes and that it was clearly the duty of government to firmly refuse to listen to the demand for Indian representation and to do their duty by the weak and the oppressed.

"It was apparently in such circumstances and under the influence of such ideas that this Commission was conceived. Small wonder then if the announcement of the appointment of this Commission has instead of giving rise to a spirit of hopefulness and confidence aroused the strongest feelings on such a large scale and in such different quarters.

## Why the Commission has been Anticipated.

"It is interesting to note the reasons for the appointment of this Commission at this particular time. "So long as the unwise counsels of political non-co-operation prevailed," thus runs the statement in His Excellency's announcement of November 8th, "it was evident that the conditions required for calm appraisal of the complicated constitutional problem were lacking, and that an earlier enquiry would have been likely only to crystalize in opposition two points of view, between which it must be the aim and the duty of statesmanship to effect a reconciliation. But there have been signs latterly that while those who have been foremost in advancing the claims of India to full self-government have in no way abandoned the principles they have felt it their duty to assert, yet there is in many quarters a greater disposition to deal with the actual facts of the situation and to appreciate what I believe to be most indubitably true, namely, that the differences which exist on these matters are differences of method or pace and not differences of principle or disagreements as to the goal which we all alike desire to reach".

"I desire to speak of His Excellency with the utmost possible respect, but I venture to think that the differences of method or pace are apt at times to be not less important than differences of principle and that if a calm appraisal of a complicated constitutional problem could not be made so long as the unwise counsels of political non-co-operation prevailed there seems to be scarcely any justification for the hope that this task could be achieved by penalizing co-operation, for I maintain that non-co-operators who have co-operated during the last few years and co-operators who have always co-operated cannot legitimately feel proud of a situation which compels them to realize that in a conflict that may arise between the European view of method and pace and the Indian view of method and pace the former must necessarily prevail and the latter can only claim to be sane and reasonable if it is prepared to accept the former. Another reason assigned for the anticipation of the date of this Commission is that the Legislative Assembly has passed five resolutions calling for the appointment of a Commission. Lord Winterton was repeatedly challenged in the House of Commons to produce those resolutions but he simply fenced with challenge. The fact is that the Assembly has never asked for such a Commission, though it has repeatedly urged its views on the question of advance. Not only Col. Wedgood but several other members of the Labour Party have correctly expressed our view that the appointment of such a Commission at a time when public opinion in England about India has been poisoned by the publication of 'Mother India' was to say the least not playing the game. There is need for some more convincing reason for this sudden fit of responsiveness on the part of government.

## Birkenhead's Plea.

"I shall not ask you to examine carefully the reasons for the exclusion of Indians from this Commission and the nature of the palliatives that have been adopted in the shape of committees. One reason which has been assigned for the appointment of a purely Parliamentary Commission is "that the framers of the original and determining Act, when they spoke of the Commission, contemplated a Parliamentary Commission. It is true that they did not so state in terms but I (that is, to say Lord Birkenhead) draw the inference that they did not so state it because they thought it so obvious." He then appealed to Lord Chelmsford and the latter observed: "He was deeply committed to the belief that the enquiry should be through the medium of a Parliamentary Commission."

"The point scarcely requires any further labouring. The Secretary of State, speaking as a constitutional lawyer, has conceded that the framers of the Act did not in terms state that the Commission to be appointed under this section was to be a purely Parliamentary Commission, that is to say a Commission consisting of members of Parliament only, but he has drawn the inference that they did not state so because it was so obvious. The difficulty of any lawyer converting an interpretation like this by a lawyer of the eminence of Lord Birkenhead who has occupied the highest judicial position in the Empire would be at any

time very great. But still I make bold to say that an interpretation of an Act, founded upon the belief as to the intention of its framer, on the floor of a political body is not the same as its interpretation in a court of law. At any rate, so far as this constitutional argument is concerned, no one ever heard of it until Lord Birkenhead put it forward with all the authority attaching to his name. We Indians are entitled to take our stand upon the plain words of the statute. We were no parties to the beliefs which might have been entertained as to the intentions of the framers of the Act in high quarters and I venture to think that if this view had been put forward bluntly in the year 1919 many of us would have had even at that time to revise our attitude. The credit for giving a rude shock to the political faith of us Liberals must undoubtedly belong to Lord Birkenhead.

#### Political Reasons.

"I shall now leave the constitutional reasons and ask your attention for a little while to the political reasons. Lord Birkenhead took shelter behind the speech of Mr. Goswami in which he is reported to have said that there was no organization which could speak in the name of the Hindu community. Now, I do not know what Mr. Goswami really meant by it. But I cannot understand that an all-knowing Secretary of State and a vigilant India Office can be unaware of the existence of a Hindu organization which has not been particularly inarticulate or inactive during the last few years. I believe there are scores of Hindus who without being members of the Hindu Mahasabha could have adequately protected Hindu interests but I cannot understand how Government would have sacrificed the Hindu cause by selecting a representative of the Hindus from among the leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha nor can I understand that the task of selecting a non-Brahman Hindu or a Sikh was equally impossible. As regards the depressed classes whose condition Lord Birkenhead describes to be "terrible and poignant," was it wholly impossible to select some one to represent them? And here let me point out to you that the portion in which he deals with the depressed classes scarcely reads like the speech of a statesman bent on the high purpose of unifying a distracted India, of elevating those who deserves to be uplifted from their fallen condition. It reads like a sensational paragraph from a certain class of newspapers in India or in England or a page from a book of a cold weather tourist.

"It may suit the purposes of our critics to exploit the misfortunes or the degraded condition of the depressed classes in relation to a definite political issue, but they cannot feel proud of their record of work in the amelioration of the condition of these classes until the commencement of the reforms. If the Secretary of State was solicitous of the depressed classes and the aborigines he was equally solicitous of the Indian Civil Service which has a deep-rooted interest in India, and he argued that "if you admitted other Parliamentary representatives you could not exclude members of the Indian Civil Service." Now it might be that a Commission of 18 or 20 people would be very unwieldy but one cannot understand why a Commission of 12 could not be fairly representative of all sections of the people and why it could not be trusted to deal with the problem in a spirit of reasonableness.

#### Nothing to be Proud of.

"It is said that an unwieldy Commission of 18 or 20 and "a fortiori" of 12 could not have produced an unanimous report. "There may not be an unanimous report now" said Lord Birkenhead, "but at any rate we shall have a report which proceeds upon the same general point of view and principle." He was afraid that there would be a very strong partizan Hindu report, a very strong Muslim report, and 3 or 4 other dissenting reports from various sections deeply interested in the decisions which are taken and that Parliament could not be assisted by disclosure of dissenting views of this kind. For arguments like these I say in all humility that there is only one word—they are the arguments of an advocate, not the arguments of a statesman. The one immediate effect of arguments of this character must be to give an impetus to class consciousness and to stimulate those differences which it should be the object of the statesman to allay, and if possible, to eradicate. If it is really be the fact that the position in India is so



hopeless as the Secretary of State in the House of Lords and Lord Winterton in the House of Commons have made it out to be, then in the name of common-sense and fairness I ask what is the good of appointing a Commission? Why entertain any talk of Reforms? Why not then follow the advice of a distinguished member of the European community in Calcutta who had the frankness and courage to say not many days ago that "the time had come for the Viceroy to sit down with his selected district officers who knew the real people of India and evolve a decent system for governing the country forgetting all democracy and all such discredited systems."

#### The Scheme of the Commission.

"Now let me draw your attention to the scheme of Commission. The Commission, as you all know, is to consist of seven members including its chairman who represents the Liberal Party. There are two representatives of Labour and four representatives of the Conservatives. I do not wish to say anything in my own words of the personnel of the Commission. I shall venture to quote on this point what the London "Times" wrote in one of its leading articles. "What has presumably happened" says the "Times," "is that the Government have found it impossible in practice to divert from England any of those leaders on whose presence the complexion of the future Parliament may be thought to depend. And for the moment and in view of the character of the Commission as "rap-porteurs" (in the Geneva phrase and not as constitution makers) the absence of the political leaders may not be altogether a disadvantage. All that is a little surprising in the circumstances is that none of the recognized front bench leaders, either Conservative or Labour, should have seized the opportunity to take part in an enquiry so incomparably more attractive and more far-reaching in its consequences than the common round of politics in England. The fact that the rank and file of the Commission are composed, broadly speaking, "of men in the second flight" (the quotations are mine) has the further effect of adding greatly both to the responsibilities of the Chairman and to his reputation for self-sacrificing public service."

#### No Men of Ideas.

"Bluntly put, barring Sir John Simon who is undoubtedly a front rank statesman, England could not spare for this great mission any of the first rate men and India must go content with men in the second flight. This is the value that is attached to this great mission. We are asked to console ourselves with the belief that "a body of men who can concentrate on this task without too much pre-occupation with the next general election is likely to be more valuable than a constellation of distracted stars. The capacity to work as a team is certainly more important than individual brilliance." In other words men of ideas are at a discount. The obsession for an unanimous report or a nearly unanimous report makes it incumbent that the men to be appointed must be what are called safe men who must be prepared to be guided by their Chairman, and must not allow their own individual ideas to interfere with their utility as a team. The irony of it is that we are invited to rejoice in such a team and to believe that these six worthies in the "second flight" can take good care of the present interests and of the future of three-hundred millions of this country.

#### Committee's Status.

"It is our purpose" said Lord Birkenhead, "that the Commission, when it visits India, should establish contact with the committee appointed for that purpose by the Central Legislature." But what is going to be the function of this committee! Here again let me quote the Secretary of State. "It has been most irrationally assumed", said Lord Birkenhead, "that they are merely to appear as a witness before the Commission. This is not the case. They are invited in a spirit of great sincerity to co-operate as colleagues with the Commission. It is contemplated that they shall prepare, in advance of the Commission's arrival, or if they find themselves within that limited period unable to do it, a year later, their own proposals and come before the Commission and say, "these are our suggestions." We claim and they claim that the West cannot devise a constitu-

tion for the East, that you cannot put eastern wine into western bottles. Well, if there be behind that claim, and I do not doubt it, the sincerity of real feeling, we afford them an opportunity of confronting our Commission with their own proposals, which can be analysed and criticised and can be accepted or rejected after that analysis and criticism.

"Further on we are told that "the Commission well develop in its activities and while they will retain contact with the committee of the Central Legislature as long as their deliberations extend to matters with which the Central Legislature is principally concerned, they will temporarily lose contact when they are journeying the provinces, but even here they will not be deprived of the constant refreshment of Indian opinion, for it is proposed—I see no recognition of this fact in any of the Indian papers—than in every province in which they journey there will be created committees of the Provincial Legislatures which will discharge the same consultative function with the Commission as is discharged at the centre of the Government by the committee of the Central Legislature. At no point, therefore, will the representatives of the Indian Legislatures be deprived of an opportunity of influencing the views of the Commission."

"Let us pause here and ask what all this comes to. Stripped of all superfluous verbiage it comes to nothing more than this that the Central Legislature will be asked to appoint a committee to prepare their own proposals and to place them before the Commission. Hitherto in the passages, that I have quoted above there is not even an indication that these committees will take part in the examination of witnesses or documents or that they will be at liberty even to submit any report. They are to place their proposals and try to persuade the Commission to accept them which will analyse and criticise those proposals and in the end may accept or reject them. They cannot vote at any stage of their contact with the Commission. They are simply there to plead, to persuade, to urge and then to withdraw, and yet we are told that these committees will be the colleagues of the Commission. If an advocate can be a colleague of a Judge, if a person who is put on his trial can be the colleague of a jury then no doubt those committees will be the colleagues of the Commission.

#### Macdonald Eloquence.

"It was left to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the leader of the opposition, to wax eloquent about the scope of these committees. He talked about the Indian Legislative Assembly as the Parliament of India and at one place in his speech he observed that the Parliament of England was saying to the Parliament of India "we are going to regard you as the representative of Indian opinion, we are going to recognize you as having an authority, sanction and position like unto our own in your country and when we want to know what is going to be the constitution of India in future, when we want to know what the opinion of political India is, we appoint a Commission, you appoint a similar body and the two Commissions working together in harmonious co-operation with each other are going to report to the House of Commons what the lines of the new constitution should be." This he says is not insulting to India but paying her the greatest compliment.

"One should have thought after this eloquent description of the position that the Indian committees would really occupy a position of equality and would in truth be able to submit a report to the House of Commons, but the rhetoric of this passage begins to appear in its true proportions when we read another portion of his speech towards the end. For later on Mr. Ramsay MacDonald himself observed, "his position and he thought the position of his friends was the quite sound constitutional position so far as the House of Commons was concerned, that they could not give the Commission of the Indian Legislature any right to make a report." Mr. Ramsay MacDonald then argues that the Indian committee "was not our Commission and we were not responsible for it. It was not responsible to us and, therefore, what objection was there to letting it be known that as far as the Indian Commission was concerned it could make a report as it liked and it could refrain from making a report if it liked. The body from which it owed its origin could deal with that report with exactly the same

freedom as we would deal with our own report." He flattered himself with the belief that "if that position was known another large rock of suspicion would be removed."

"Now it may be asked what is all this if it is not absolutely confounding eloquence. The Indian committee may report to its own Legislature and its Legislature can deal with its report exactly with the same freedom as Parliament will deal with the report of "its Commission." But is not Parliament the ultimate authority and what is the good of the Indian Legislature enjoying the liberty of dealing with the report of its own committee when it knows that its decisions are to be of no greater value than mere proposals and that its report can not have the same constitutional authority attaching to it as will belong to the report of the Commission in the eyes of Parliament.

#### Legislature's Status.

"I have quoted these distinguished statesmen at length only because I am anxious to avoid any misunderstanding of their position. But I cannot help feeling that they were either carried away by their own eloquence or they felt that the assurances of equality couched in appealing terms and flattering as they are to our vanity will be sufficient to allay our fears and to assuage our feelings. Hitherto it has been customary with English statesmen to repudiate any claim on the part of the Indian Legislature representing as it does about 2 per cent of the population that it can speak for the teeming millions of India. Now a superficial view of Mr. MacDonald's speech and the speeches of some other statesmen would make us believe that they have at last discovered what was not hitherto so obvious to them that the Indian Legislature can truly be said to represent the teeming millions of India. The fact of the matter is that when once you closely examine these speeches the conviction is forced on you that having decided to take this step His Majesty's Government and the statesmen of the other parties could only defend that position by an exuberance of language.

#### Another Palliative.

"There is yet another palliative provided and we are asked to reconcile ourselves to this scheme by remembering that at the next stage "after the Commission has presented its report, the proposals of the Government on it will be sent, according to precedent, to both the Houses of Parliament." I have a distinct recollection of the work of the Joint Select Committee in the year 1919. I was examined by it and so were many other Indian friends of mine. Constitutionally the creation of such a committee is perfectly understandable and defensible, but constitutionally again I ask how is it possible for any Indian delegation whether of the committees of the Indian Legislatures or any other class of persons to claim equality with the select committee of Parliament or to share responsibility with that select committee? Let not, therefore, the Indian position be misunderstood. At any rate the position of our party is and has been that while constitutionally the ultimate decision lies with Parliament there is nothing in the Act to prevent Parliament from taking in Indians into the Statutory Commission and giving them the right of participating in the recommendations of that Commission. A true spirit of co-operation and broad-minded statesmanship required that Indians should have been taken into the Commission and the creation of this cumbrous machinery of committees with all bombastic claims for its equality can be no substitute either for a mixed commission or for a real Round Table Conference.

#### Communal Fight.

"When Lord Birkenhead and Lord Winterton referred to the Hindu-Mahomedan differences in India in justification of the exclusion of Indians from this Commission I wonder whether they had forgotten the state of things that prevailed in another Dominion when a great statesman whose name in constitutional history has become immortal described in his inimitable language the differences that rent the public life of that country. Writing so far back as 1838 about Canada Lord Durham wrote in one of his despatches as follows:—"The first

point to which I would draw your attention being one with which all others are more less connected, is the existence of a most bitter animosity between the Canadians and the British, not as two parties holding different opinions and seeking different objects in respect to Government, but as different races engaged in a national contest. What may be the immediate subject of dispute seems to be of no consequence; so surely as there is a dispute on any subject, the great bulk of the Canadians and the great bulk of the British appear ranged against each other. In the next place, the mutual dislike of the two classes extends beyond politics into social life, where, with some trifling exceptions again, all intercourse is confined to persons of the same origin. Grown up persons of a different origin seldom or never meet in private societies, and even the children, when they quarrel, divide themselves into French and English like their parents. In the schools and the streets of Montreal, the real capital of the Province, this is commonly the case.....Such a sentiment is naturally evinced rather by trifles than by acts of intrinsic importance. There has been no solemn or formal declaration of national hostility, but not a day nor scarcely an hour passes without some petty insult, some provoking language, or even some serious mutual affront, occurring between persons of French and British descent." But let us not forget that India is not Canada, and that these are not the spacious days of a Durham.

#### The Indian Point of View.

"Now, it must be a real tragedy if all of us have conspired together to deliberately misunderstand them, or to underrate their professions of helping us on towards the goal. Speaking in the House of Commons Lord Winterton assured that august assembly that "evidence was daily accumulating that the raging, tearing propaganda against the Commission by "certain persons who were always opposed to the Government of India" (the quotations are mine), as they were entitled to be, did not represent the real views of a very large number of people in India who took interest in these matters." The strident dogmatism and emphasis which are the privileges of an Under-Secretary, more particularly when he has two flying visits to India to his credit, cannot for obvious reasons accord with the serene and exalted position of a Prime Minister, and accordingly we find Mr. Baldwin speaking in a different vein. "That there should have been any misunderstanding" said Mr. Baldwin, "is particularly regrettable, because it led to premature rejection of the proposals by the distinguished statesmen of India who worked and co-operated with the Government during some very difficult years since the Reforms came into force."

"If Lord Winterton symbolises the spirit which has overcome the India Office then it is not by any means difficult to understand that he should be prepared to tell the House of Commons that the raging, tearing propaganda against the Commission is being conducted by certain persons who were "always" opposed to the Government of India. I do not wish to disclaim or disown my share in that propaganda—but it must be a remarkable comment upon the hold which Lord Winterton, or Lord Birkenhead and may I add the Government of India (I do not exclude the Indian members thereof) have upon the imagination or the political faith of men of 'moderate' views that such sober, staid, thoughtful and cautious 'statesmen' (or it is more appropriate now to call them agitators) as Sir Sivaswamy Aiyar in Madras, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad in Bombay: Sir Syed Ali Imam and Mr. Sinha in Bihar, Sir Abdur Rahim in Bengal, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, Sahebrada Aftab Ahmad Khan and Mr. Chintamani in the United Provinces, all of whom have at one time or other held high office and have worked the Reform and 'co-operated with the Government during some very difficult years should in their frenzied zeal for the 'boycott' of this ill-omened Commission forget themselves, and be false to their traditions and to those principles and convictions under the spell of which they offered to work and did work the Reforms in the midst of popular obloquy and much misunderstanding on the part of the bulk of their own countrymen and their former associates in public life. All of them could not have hoped to be appointed members of the Commission and few of them could have on personal grounds

liked the idea of being taken away from their normal avocations in life for a period of two or three years. If their English critics have nothing more to say in explanation of their conduct than that they are being actuated by disappointment, chagrin or pique, then I say—and say so with confidence—that that charge will have to be brought against an overwhelmingly large number of Indian politicians barring of course the faithful few who place caste, or creed, or class above the country. But I shall not waste your time or mine any more with refuting charges of this character.

### Worst Challenge.

"I do not think a worse challenge has been thrown out over before to Indian nationalism, and notwithstanding the profuse assurances in Mr. Baldwin's speech and the yet more profuse assurances in Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's speech, Indian Nationalists of the Moderate school have been compelled to ask if the only way of recognizing the spirit of co-operation is by telling Indians that their lot is to be none other than that of petitioners, that they cannot be trusted to participate in the responsibility of making recommendations to Parliament for the future of their country, and that all that they may aspire to is to put their proposals before the Commission which may accept them or reject them, and again to repeat the same process of persuasion, argument and discussion before the Joint Committee of Parliament. Now if this is what is meant by co-operation, if this is the new idea of equality of status on which we are to be fed, if our patriotism is a prejudice and if the patriotism of the seven members of Parliament is to be treated as impartial justice, then we Liberals feel justified in telling the Government here and in England. "You may do anything you like in the assertion of your right as supreme power, but we are not going to acquiesce in this method of dealing with us. Neither our self-respect nor our sense of duty to our country can permit us to go near the Commission."

"It seems to me that the entire position has been from the Indian point of view so well summed up by Colonel Wedgwood in his letter to Lala Lajpat Rai and it so vividly represents the feeling of many of us that I make no apology for quoting a portion of it here: "Petitioning for little scraps of liberty" says Colonel Wedgwood, "is a dirty business, and there has been too much of it. You lose your self-respect and you will get despised. I was always against non-co-operation as you know and I am so still. Take what share in governing you can; use every power and every opportunity afforded by the Government of India Act. That is not 'crawling' but worth while fighting, and incidentally may help to wipe out some of those curses of "Mother India". But this Commission does not require your help. There is no need to stand in the witness-box and be cross-examined by persons of no great importance who have not before shown any interest in your views or feelings. They can easily get the case up from the evidence and reports laid before the Muddiman Committee. Officials can supply all the facts and are likely to do so with more impartiality, not less, if the victims are dumb. Or if they like they can read the newspapers. Open (or empty) minds can easily get food and they as easily forget it".

"I am afraid, however, there are some among our countrymen who feel that we should not allow judgment to go by default, that we should not throw away an opportunity like this of putting our case before the Commission and through it before Parliament. They feel that it is a mercy that Lord Birkenhead had not appointed one or two 'safe' or 'tame' Indians who might easily have made the position for us worse. Again there are those who obsessed by communal feeling hold that the Mahomedans may steal a march on the Hindus and the latter may afterwards have to regret that they did not follow the good example of the former. Those who rejoice in this decision, because they have been saved from the worse calamity of being represented by bad Indians on this Commission, probably assume that we should have been prepared to acquiesce in the appointment of such Indians or that their support of the recommendations of their European colleagues would have made the task of the Government much easier or imposed on us some sort of obligation to acquiesce in the decisions of these unpatriotic Indians.

## No Spoils to be Divided.

"To Hindus who are afraid of the Mahomedans getting a richer share of the spoils I have only one thing to say and it is that there are no spoils to be divided. Besides, in my opinion, it is neither just nor fair to the Muslim community of India as a whole to attribute such questionable motives. When one remembers the alacrity with which distinguished Muslim leaders who have hitherto occupied such a large space in the public life of the country have denounced the exclusion of Indians from this Commission and declared in no faltering or hesitating terms their firm resolve to have nothing to do with this Commission. One should not find it difficult to reconcile oneself to the attitude of some other Muslim leaders in the Punjab or Bengal—at present the two plague-spots of Indian communalism—who have on an occasion like this placed their community above their country. So long as the Muslim community in India can boast of men like Mr. Jinnah, Dr. Ansari, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, Sir Saiyed Ali Imam, Mr. Hasan Imam and some others (I am not referring to those who are confirmed Swarajists or 'Extremists') so long it may be truly said that notwithstanding much of a depressing character that there may be at present in our internal situation there is hope for Indian nationalism. Holding the views that I do on the Hindu-Mahomedan question I feel that these distinguished leaders would be perfectly justified in pressing for the protection of the interests of their minority community in any scheme of constitutional advance that may seriously be considered at present. But it is all their honour and credit that on a critical occasion like this they should not have allowed their duty to their community to prevail against their duty to their country.

## Function and Duty of the Liberal Party.

"In the situation created by the decision of His Majesty's Government the duty of the Liberal Party in India to my mind is absolutely plain. If the Liberal Party in India is now asked to accept the new doctrine of co-operation which means that it must always subordinate its will to the higher will not of Parliament but of its agents then clearly the time has come when we should say that that is not our conception of co-operation. Much as the Liberal Party would like to work in an atmosphere of good-will, much as it would like to avoid all bitterness, much as it would like to help in the task of an ordered and safe development of the constitution it cannot be a party to an arrangement which is wholly destructive of that spirit of mutual confidence which alone can beget co-operation. It cannot be a party to anything which is inconsistent with the honour and self respect of India and its moral right to effectively participate in the determination of its constitution nor can it in its zeal for co-operation forget its duty to the country in a crisis of this character. We cannot and we should not allow our energies any longer to be dissipated in the barren and thankless task of party factions and squabbles, and I honestly think that the time has come when we should make an earnest and honest endeavour to open a new chapter in our history. I do not plead for the sudden merging of one party into another, that must be left to the irresistible forces of time. But I do plead for common and joint work through the chosen representative of each party in the preparation of a scheme of self-government to be presented to the country and to Parliament. That challenge has been thrown to us repeatedly during the last four years and we ought to accept it.

## Hindu-Moslem Unity.

"Coming to the question of Hindu-Moslem Unity be said, "There may be merit in the protection of animal life, but the destruction of human life cannot bring any merit in this world or the next. Similarly I imagine that howsoever much music at certain times and at certain places may be distasteful to some, they have no right to impose their views on others. To my mind these are questions which cannot be solved by an arid discussion of legal or customary rights and if that could be done we would have to pay dearly for such solution. Their solution depends upon a healthy recognition of the equal rights of all. Shuddhi, Sangathan and Tabligh may be very good war cries for a community which is bent upon destroying its own house but they ill become a community

which is at all serious about building up an edifice of a permanent character for itself and for its posterity. Far be it from me to suggest or expect that either the Hindus or the Mahomedans, who are accustomed to look upon Asia as the cradle of religion, who pride themselves upon being the custodians of the rich treasures of 'spiritual' tradition left to us by our great ancestors, should in their quest for material advancement squander away those treasures, but if we want to bring ourselves into line with the modern world, we should not waste those treasures in achieving ignoble ends wholly inconsistent with our professions of nationalism. The progress of all states—and particularly those comprising peoples of different races and different religions—has been towards a secularisation of the state, which does not mean the destruction of the spiritual life of their peoples. When this is recognised, I think there will be no room left in our public life for leaders of a certain type—leaders who by inflaming religious passion and letting loose the forces of bigotry and intolerance are narrowing our sympathies and paralysing generous thought and co-operative action.

"Discussing at length the majority and minority question that is at present raging in the country, he said :—"I earnestly urge that we should apply ourselves seriously to the task of reducing our ideas to writing on the question of a suitable constitution for India and when we undertake that work we should definitely deal with the question of providing protection for the minorities and other classes requiring special protection. It is only then that we shall be able to appreciate the importance of those issues and the paramount necessity of a spirit of compromise.

#### Lines of Constitutional Advance.

"It is not my intention to discuss at any length the broad principles on which we should proceed to prepare the draft constitution. There are, however, just a few observations which I shall permit myself to make. It is no longer a question whether western wine can be poured into eastern bottles. That question was answered by Parliament so far back as 1917 and 1919 and notwithstanding the fact that kindly friends remind us now and again that parliamentary institutions have failed in Europe and that they are scarcely suited to the conditions of India and are wholly out of accord with our history and our temperament the issue is as to whether we prefer to remain under what Mr. Montagu described as a wooden and ante-diluvian system or whether we shall tread the path which has been trodden not only in the West but also in the East whenever and wherever there has been a general awakening. There is no doubt that we shall commit mistakes and perhaps blunders, but we shall profit by our experience as other nations have. Originality in politics and constitution making may be very tempting, but it is at best a doubtful game.

"I, therefore, think that so far as we are concerned, there is no going back on the ideal of responsible government, that is to say, a form of government in which the executive will be responsible to the legislature. The electorates have to be widened and to be educated but we cannot wait until their education has reached a stage of perfection. Such electorates exist nowhere. The process of their education is an ever-continuing one and no doubt in India along with an extensive and intensive programme of educating our 'masters' we shall have to depend upon the repeated exercise of the franchise as a powerful educative factor. Similarly our progress towards full responsible government may be somewhat retarded but it cannot be indefinitely postponed because we cannot defend ourselves on our borders. For the present state of our helplessness, responsibility must rest on other shoulders but there again the question should be of not appointing commission and shelving their reports or toying with the problem, but of evolving and executing a policy of military training and organization in relation to an India which is soon going to be self-governing and not in relation to an India which may after a century hope to be near the fulfilment of its cherished aspirations. Again I think that with all the difficulties that the problem of Indian States presents it should not be difficult to establish with their consent a system of relationship with them which should on the one hand preserve their autonomy and treaty rights and on the other bring them into line with the progressive spirit of the times. In short as I visualise the future, I look forward to an India consisting

of federated states in direct and well-defined relationship with Indian states under the aegis of British Crown, as an equal member of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and not as a dependency under the stewardship of a district India Office exercising over us the functions of an earthly Providence.

"If all that is passing at the back of the minds of the high and the mighty at the present time is how best to make the working of dyarchy smooth, without touching the central government and without affecting the position of the Secretary of State, then I think there is a wide gulf which divides us from them. Neither the establishment of a "separate purse" for the two halves of the government, nor the duplication of legislatures for the two halves, nor the establishment of old-fashioned second-chamber at Delhi can in any degree satisfy any section of intelligent Indian opinion. I should be the last person to ignore the necessity for providing for proper and adequate safeguards against hasty legislation or action calculated to affect internal security or weaken our national safety."

## Proceedings and Resolutions.

SECOND DAY—28TH DECEMBER 1927.

### 1.—Condolence.

Re-assembling on the next day with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in the chair, the Federation passed a resolution of condolence at the deaths of Mr. C. S. Deole, Rao Bahadur V. R. Pandit and Mr. J. B. Sen who had been staunch Liberals.

### 2.—Boycott of Statutory Commission.

Sir Sivaswami Aiyer then moved the following principal resolution :—

The National Liberal Federation is strongly of opinion that the official announcement made about the constitution of the Statutory Commission and the functions of the committees of Indian legislatures is unacceptable, as it flagrantly denies the right of the Indian people to participate on equal terms in framing the future constitution of the country, that the legislatures and Indians throughout the country should have nothing to do with the Commission at any stage or in any form and that the Council of the Federation be authorised to take all necessary steps to give effect to this resolution.

Sir Sivaswami AIYER, said the resolution was intended as a protest against the constitution of the Commission and the procedure to be followed by it. Even Lord Birkenhead had to admit that the terms of the statute did not forbid the appointment of a mixed commission. He had said that it was obvious that the Commission must be purely parliamentary. But to the speaker it was far from obvious. What was very obvious was that the statute imposed no fetters at all on the Government as regards the constitution of the Commission. If so, it was no right or accepted mode of construction to refer to what passed in the minds of the framers of the statute. Sir Sivaswamy quoted in support of his statement the dictum of Lord Halsbury that the persons worst qualified to interpret the statute were its framers, who would be tempted to import what was in their minds and not what was justifiable by the plain meaning of the statute.

Another ground on which the parliamentary commission was sought to be justified was one of experience, namely, the necessity of getting an unanimous report and not making the Commission unwieldy by adding representatives of different interests in the country including the aborigines and the depressed classes. The speaker wished the Government who put such emphasis on the representation of the depressed classes and the abori-



gines had the same tender regard for them in South Africa and Kenya. The Government had not in the past been deterred by fear of unwieldiness in making similar commissions representative.

Yet another reason advanced was that differing reports might be presented to Parliament, making it difficult for that body to judge between them. The speaker never thought that such a poor opinion of the intelligence of Parliament would be expressed by such a distinguished member of Parliament as Lord Birkenhead. Granted that Parliament had the ultimate right to determine India's fate—though even this was not granted by some—but surely it did not follow from this that Indians should be denied the right of participating in the conduct of the preliminary inquiry and the deliberations of the Commission on equal terms with the other members.

It had been stated, continued Sir Sivaswamy, that amazing generosity had been shown by the Government in the proposed scheme of the association of the committees of legislatures with the Commission. But the Liberals were prepared to forego this unique concession, to throw it away in favour of a convention, such as was convened in the case of the dominions like Australia and South Africa, to frame a scheme which Parliament would only have to adopt. It had further been contended that the boycott would recoil on the heads of those who wielded that weapon. Sir Sivaswamy uttered a note of warning and said what the Federation intended by the boycott was different from what was intended by other parties. The Liberals limited the term to the Commission only.

As for the argument that the judgment of the Commission would go by default, the speaker was sure that Sir John Simon and the other members would not be so ill-advised or ungenerous as to adopt any reactionary measures. Concluding, the speaker declared that even a worm would turn and even a Liberal would show his resentment at the insult of the Commission by refusal to co-operate with it.

Seconding the resolution, Sir Moropant JOSHI said the critics of the boycott movement had been flaunting before them the possibility of disorder breaking out of it and that the Liberal Federation might be partly responsible for that consequence. He wanted to make it as clear as possible that the sole responsibility for anything that might happen in the country hereafter would be on the Government and the Government alone. (Cheers.) As at present constituted, Indians had lost the position of vantage which they would have had as members and co-equals of the Commission. They had only the position of suppliants at the bar. The inference from this was that Indians were not fit to sit with the European members. The Liberals resented such a stigma cast on Indians not for its immediate effects but because it might be used as a precedent in future.

Referring to the argument that the boycott might not be effective, the speaker admitted it might not be as effective as in Egypt, but a large section of the intelligentsia of the country who counted in political matters would not go to the Commission. That was enough for him.

Rao Bahadur DAMLE, supporting the motion, thought that England would not misunderstand the display of self-respect on the part of India, but would rather treat her with contempt if she took the insult lying down.

There was, therefore, no ground for the apprehension expressed by Lord Sinha that India's cause would suffer by a policy of boycott.

Babu Bhagavati Saran Singh, Mr. Chunilal Gandhi, Mr. M. B. Marathe and others addressed the Federation supporting the resolution.

Mr. CHINTAMANI, who next supported the resolution, declared that the Statutory Commission was the device proposed by Mr. Montagu in order to make India's political advance automatic. Mr. Montagu intended the 1919-Reforms as the first step on the road to self-government, that Governors and Governors-General should work them with this idea and as if they were responsible to the legislatures and that they should be on their guard against employing arguments against the grant of self-government on the ground of India having no army of her own or of her educational progress not being wide enough. In the light of Mr. Montagu's intention the enormity of the offence against India's self-respect by this Commission would be realised.

Continuing, Mr. Chintamani charged every Governor in the country and the Secretary of State for India with deliberate, persistent and contemptuous refusal to co-operate with Indian opinion. He charged them also with incapacity to show any sense of responsibility in dealing with the problems of India. It was not necessary for Sir John Simon to give up his position in England and come to India to find out the full responsibility for the disastrous state of educational backwardness in the country. It was the Government which should shoulder the responsibility for it. If Indians had been appointed on the Commission they would have convinced that body of this.

Mr. Chintamani referred to Lord Sinha's statement that the boycotters should remember Sir Surendranath Banerjee, Mr. Gokhale and Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and ask themselves whether these revered leaders would have approved of the step. The speaker contended that he had no doubt whatever that neither of them would have disapproved of it. Mr. Chintamani said the object of the Tory Government in hurrying the appointment of the Commission was not to follow up Mr. Montagu's policy, was not the introduction of further reforms, but either to perpetuate the *status quo* or modify it so as to amount to retrogression. It might be asked why not in that case try to prevent the mischief by giving evidence before the Commission. If he had the least ground for cherishing the illusion that their evidence would in any way influence the Commission he would have advocated giving evidence before it. But he had no such illusion. On the other hand, one serious harm would be done by the country co-operating with the Commission which could then claim to have heard all varieties of opinion in the country and yet to have come to adverse decisions. He wanted to deprive the Commission of the moral authority to make this claim which Indians would wantonly have presented it if they gave evidence before it. As for the argument that India was not united, he asked if the British Government put this question to Ireland when she was made a free State.

Mr. Chintamani concluded with the declaration that the resolution was intended to show that the Liberals were as ready as, if not more than others to do everything to uphold and sustain the honour of the country and promote its interests. He announced that the Indian Association of Calcutta had intimated that the Bengal Liberals were opposed to the policy of boycott.

The resolution was then put and unanimously passed.

### 3.—Indian Representation on the League of Nations.

Sir Phiroze Sethna then moved,

Strongly urging that Indian representation on the League of Nations and other international or Imperial Conferences should be by delegation predominantly Indian in its composition and led by an Indian.

He said all that the resolution demanded was that the Government should convert into positive action the lip sympathy which the Government had shown to the principle of Indians leading Indian delegations. Two successive Law Members had expressed the Government's agreement with the principle on different occasions.

An amendment to insert the words 'preferably elected by the legislatures' after the word 'composition' was moved, but it fell through for want of a seconder. The original resolution was then unanimously passed.

### 4.—A Scheme of Responsible Govt.

Rao Bahadur Kale moved :—

That a committee consisting of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru as chairman and Sir Sivaswami Aiyer, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Mr. Chintamani and others as members, with powers to add, be constituted in order to formulate, as far as may be in co-operation with similar committees of other political organisations in the country, a scheme of responsible government and that the committee do submit its report to the Council of the Federation as early as practicable.

The resolution was largely supported and unanimously passed. The Federation then adjourned.

## THIRD DAY—29TH DECEMBER 1927.

### 5.—Rural Reconstruction.

The Federation re-assembled on this day and passed the following resolutions. Mr. G. K. Devadhar moved the following resolution :—

Affirming that the condition of the masses in India was deplorable owing to their poverty, low physical stamina and lack of education and strongly urging upon the Government and the people of India the urgent need for initiating adequate and suitable measures for the improvement of their moral, material and physical condition, and for this purpose earnestly recommending the promotion of free and compulsory education among boys and girls alike, development of agriculture, expansion of the co-operative movement and other schemes for debt redemption, initiation of schemes for rural reconstruction, improvement of village sanitation by systematic propaganda for spreading a knowledge of the laws of health and by introduction of organizations like village panchayats.

### 6.—Inter-Communal Relations.

The next resolution ran as follows :—

(a) This Federation places on record its deep conviction that in the interest of the general progress of the country and in particular for the early attainment by India of responsible Government it is of paramount importance that the unfortunate differences of a communal character should be composed, and in order to remove this serious menace to the progress of the country this Federation calls upon all its members to promote and actively support every moment calculated to bring about a better understanding between Hindus and Muslims and to place the relations of the two communities upon an honourable footing of toleration in religious matters and on the basis of unity in political matters by a just representation of minorities in the legislatures and with due regard to efficiency in the public services of the country.

(b) This Federation cordially appreciates the earnestness of the distinguished Muslim leaders who have put forward the scheme for settlement of the outstanding differences

between the Hindu and Muslim communities and suggests that various items of the proposed settlement should be discussed at an early date by duly elected representatives of the communities in a spirit of such genuine co-operation as will lead to complete agreement.

(c) This Federation affirms that national patriotism should be the foundation of representative institutions and that such patriotism can best be developed by a system of joint electorates qualified by reservation of seats for important minorities until such time as it may be possible with the good-will of the communities concerned to dispense with the reservation of seats.

#### 7.—Sandhurst Committee's Report.

Mr. Manu Subedar then moved that :—

(a) While recognizing that the recommendations of the Indian Sandhurst Committee do not satisfy Indian aspirations the Federation deplores the delay and unwillingness of the Government to give effect to them, as they mark a beginning in Indianization of the higher ranks of the Army in India and urges that no time should be lost in carrying them out.

(b) This Federation further urges that a progressive reduction should be carried out in the ratio of the British to the Indian troops till the Army in India is completely Indianized.

#### 8.—Condition of Industrial Labour.

Mr. N. M. Joshi moved the next resolution :—

Recommending to the Government of India to appoint a committee to enquire into the condition of industrial labour such as wages, hours of work, unemployment and unprovided for sickness and to suggest remedial legislative measures, when found necessary, as establishing a machinery for fixing minimum wages, for reduction of hours of work, for establishing unemployment and health insurance and establishing machinery for settling industrial disputes. The Federation recommended to all Liberals in the country to help the working classes to organize themselves into unions for protecting their interests and mutually helping themselves by co-operative efforts.

The Federation also passed two resolutions, put from the Chair, one relating to Indian states and the other to the Indian mercantile marine :—

#### 9.—Indian States.

The first noted with satisfaction that certain states had made a beginning in the direction of introducing representative institutions in their territories and hoped that all Indian states would take early steps to bring their administration into accord with modern ideas of progressive Government.

#### 10.—Indian Mercantile Marine.

The second while welcoming the establishment of the training ship 'Dufferin' in Bombay strongly urged on the Government of India with a view to make the training ship a success, the necessity for taking legislative action (1) to ensure compulsory employment on coastal ships of Indians as officers and engineers in accordance with the recommendation of the Indian Mercantile Marine Committee, to reserve the coastal trade to Indian shipping, (2) to help Indian shipping to participate in the overseas trade of India, (3) to adopt effective measures to develop the ship-building industry, and (4) to legislate for the abolition of the deferred rebate system.

#### 11.—Imperial Policy in East Africa.

The next resolution opposed the new policy of associating the immigrant communities in the responsibilities and trusteeship of the Government of East Africa and urged His Majesty's Government to retain all political powers in its own hands and not to advance the political status of either immigrant community till a fair proportion of the natives attained franchise on common property and educational qualifications and could obtain an effective share in representation by election on a common register.

The resolution also protested against the non-inclusion of a single Indian member on the East African Commission.

#### 12.—Depressed Classes.

Proposed by Mr. V. M. Chandavarkar the Federation passed a resolution,

Impressing on all provincial Governments and local bodies the necessity of allotting annually an adequate sum for the award of scholarships to children of the depressed classes and of making their education free and urging the provincial Governments to open the door of all services under them for the admission of fit candidates belonging to these classes and give them preference for employment when fully qualified candidates were available.

The President then made a feeling reference to the late Hakim Ajmal Khan and his great services to the cause of Indian nationalism especially in the reconciliation of communities. The president moved a resolution of condolence which was passed in solemn silence.

### 13.—Bengal Detenues and Land Revenue Policy.

The Federation then adopted the following resolutions put from the Chair :—

(1) Protesting against the inordinate delay made by nearly every provincial Government in carrying into effect the recommendation of the Joint Select Committee of Parliaments that the general principles of land assessment should be embodied in legislation and urging that this should be done without delay ; and

(2) strongly reiterating its protest against the continued detention of many persons in Bengal under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1925, and urging that all of them should be either set free or tried under the Ordinary Criminal Law.

### 14.—Declaration of Policy.

By the next resolution the Federation adopted a statement of policy in relation to the Statutory Commission.

The Liberal party's manifesto reiterated all the arguments advanced by the Liberals so far against agreeing to go before the Statutory Commission and concluded :—

The acceptance of the proposals of the Government does not appear to the Liberal party to be consistent with the self-respect of India or with their unanswerable claim that Indians should have an effective share in the determination of the constitution of their own country. It is obvious from all the proceedings in Parliament that this Statutory Commission is to be used as a precedent for the future. In the opinion of the Liberal party, India ought not to be subject to repeated enquiries by periodic commissions, which are bound to be detrimental to the development of her national life and constitution, and the time has come when a permanent and durable constitution capable of automatic growth and development should be framed by a competent and representative body. Even upon the assumption, which the Liberal party repudiates, that there is need for further periodic enquiries, the Liberal party cannot, while accepting the constitutional position that the final authority according to the constitution is Parliament, accept the precedent of a Statutory Commission from which Indians are now excluded and will always be excluded in future. In short, in the opinion of the Liberal party, the Statutory Commission fails to satisfy the test of properly constituted commission, with adequate Indian representation, nor does it amount to a round table conference. It is a bare and emphatic assertion of the right of Parliament, not only as the final authority to pass the constitution for India, but also to adopt an exclusively British agency for exploring the avenues of progress, and it is at the same time a negation of India's claim that it should have an effective part in the determination of her constitution. In these circumstances and for these reasons, the Liberal party have come to the conclusion that they should have nothing to do with the Commission at any stage, to any extent or in any form.

The Federation then adopted some formal resolutions regarding the election of secretaries, etc., and accepted Sir Tej Bahadur's invitation to hold the next session at Allahabad in 1928. The session thereupon dispersed.

# The All-India Muslim League.

For some time past fears were entertained about a split among the Muslims over the question of the venue of the All-India Muslim League. Several efforts at compromise were made but all these failed and two sessions of the League were held at the same time, one in Calcutta according to the decision of the Council of the League held at Delhi on December 11th, and another at Lahore in pursuance of the former decision of the Same Council held on Nov. 20th. At the meeting of the Council at Delhi on Dec. 11th the attendance was poor as out of 300 members only two dozens were present, but a substantial number of votes had been secured by rival sections by proxy. Among those present the Punjab was strongly represented and others consisted of members from the United Provinces and Delhi. A couple of hours before the appointed hour an informal exchange of views started and compromises were suggested to secure unanimity of decision. His Highness the Aga Khan's statement had created a difficult position for his supporters as most of the votes secured by proxy proceeded on the assumption that His Highness the Aga Khan would agree to his election. They, however, still hoped that if the Council of the League invited His Highness the Aga Khan, he might yet reconsider his decision and respond to the call of the community. The compromises informally discussed were :—session at Calcutta with Sir Muhammad Shafi as president or a session at Lahore with His Highness the Aga Khan as president. Both parties, however, were doubtful regarding the votes that the other had up its sleeves because the issue depended on those votes. The following is the official report issued by Dr. Kitchlew, General Secretary of the League :—

According to notice, a meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League was to be held in the office of the League, but as Hakim Ajmal Khan was unable to attend on account of illness, the meeting was, at his request, held at his residence. Twenty-three members attended. Hakim Ajmal Khan presided. Malik Feroze Khan Noon asked for a statement from the general secretary as to the circumstance in which he had called the meeting. Dr. Kitchlew explained that he had received letters and telegrams from Bengal, Madras and other places expressing the disappointment of leading men of those places at the venue fixed and the president-elect and asking for reconsideration of both these points. He further added that he had called the meeting under Rule 19 of the constitution of the League, which gave him full powers to call a meeting if he thought it necessary. The president of the League, Mr. Jinnah, had been consulted in the matter and so the meeting had been called.

Objection was taken by Maulana Mahomed Ali and others at the manner in which Malik Feroze Khan Noon had taken pains to cross-examine the general secretary and it was pointed out that if any objection was to be taken, it should be taken in the form of a regular point of order.

Accordingly, Mr. Noon raised the point that the meeting was not in order.

This elicited a lengthy and interesting discussion in the course of which it was pointed out by Malik Barkat Ali and others that Rule 19 gave full powers to the secretary to call a meeting when he thought it necessary, that the facts and circumstances quoted by the secretary clearly showed that reconsideration was necessary, and that the meeting could not in law go behind the discretion vested in the secretary. He further declared that the point that the matter having once been decided should not be reconsidered under any circumstances had absolutely no foundation under the constitution of the League. In fact, the Council of the League was a body with plenary jurisdiction and it had inherited powers to consider its decision.

After this discussion and in accordance with the sense of the meeting, the president ruled that the meeting was quite in order and perfectly legal.

The discussion of the items on the agenda was then proceeded with. The question of venue had to be taken first under the rules of the League. A very lengthy discussion took place in which Sir Muhammed Iqbal, Malik Feroze Khan Noon, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Malik Barkat Ali, Pir Tajuddin, Maulana Mahomed Ali, Dr. Ziauddin, Sheikh Abdullah, Mr. Abdul Aziz and others took part. After considerable discussion votes were taken and it was found that 84 votes were in favour of Calcutta and 54 in favour of Lahore. Out of these, 74 and 41 votes, respectively, for Calcutta and Lahore, were of absentee members, who under the rules of the League had sent in their written opinion.

The president then declared that Calcutta had been selected as the venue of the next session of the All-India Muslim League.

After this discussion Malik Feroze Khan Noon, Sir Muhammed Iqbal, Maulana Hasrat Mohani and a few other gentlemen from Lahore left the meeting.

The question of president-elect was then taken up. It was stated that 79 votes of the absentee members had been received for His Highness the Aga Khan and 44 votes of the absentees for Sir Muhammed Shafi, but it was pointed out that His Highness the Aga Khan had declined to replace Sir Muhammad Shafi under any circumstances and therefore the question of reconsideration of the matter of presidentship did not arise. This objection was accepted by the president, who ruled that the matter of reconsideration of the president's election should not, therefore, be taken up.

It may be mentioned here that before the meeting began certain members from the Punjab had offered a compromise to Mr. Noon and his party, according to which Calcutta should be the venue and Sir Muhammad Shafi the president, but this compromise was not accepted by Mr. Noon and his party, who wanted the venue to be Lahore and His Highness the Aga Khan as president.

## The Calcutta Session.

In pursuance of the above decision of the Council of the League the 19th session of the All-India Muslim League was held at Calcutta in the spacious Town Hall on the 30TH DECEMBER 1927 in the evening. The attendance was fair and the *dais* was occupied fully by prominent leaders and distinguished visitors. The latter included Mrs. Besant, Mrs. Naidu, Major Graham Pole, Mr. Garrett, Mr. T. C. Goswami, Mr. S. C. Mitter and Mr. N. R. Sarkar. The proceedings began with a recitation from the Koran.

Mr. Jinnah communicated the Council's decision, which met early in the day, electing Maulvi Mahomed Yakub in place of Sir Muhammad Shafi.

Sir Ali Imam, proposing Maulvi Mahomed Yakub to the chair, said that Mr. Yakub enjoyed the confidence of the Parliament of India, namely, the Legislative Assembly of which he was the Deputy Speaker. Sir Ali Imam added that Mr. Yakub's views about the Simon Commission were strong and that gave Sir Ali great pleasure because Mr. Yakub's vote in the Assembly would carry particular authority.

### Chairman's Speech.

Mr. Majibur Rahman, Chairman of the Reception Committee, then delivered his address supporting the boycott of the Simon Commission and favouring separate electorate for Musalmans.

After deploring the unfortunate split in the League, he referred to the Simon Commission and said:—"I should not like to enter into any question of abstruse political theory, but to me it seems a matter of bare justice and elementary commonsense that the people for whom a constitution is intended should have a paramount and exclusive voice in the drafting of that constitution. I take exception to the preamble of the Government of India Act of 1919, which lays down that it is the British Parliament that will be the judge of the time and measure of every advance towards the

realization of responsible government in India. Moreover, the total and deliberate exclusion of Indians from the Commission is not merely "a calculated affront to India"—that may be the language of sentiment and wounded susceptibility—it is a denial of elementary political justice. It is a negation of India's right to have a paramount voice in settling her own constitution. It indicates a subtle and deep determination to prejudice the issue and forcibly to cram down the throat of our people a constitution, the details of which have been settled and ready made before-hand.'

Proceeding, Mr. Rahman said:—'While boycotting the Commission, we must accept Lord Birkenhead's challenge and evolve a constitution for our country. I must frankly say that if we cannot do this much, we do not deserve a better government than what we have at present. I am not, however, a pessimist and I do hope that the leaders of the different political parties and communities will put their heads together and then frame a constitution and thus show to the world that we mean business.'

Turning to the question of separate electorates for Muslims, Mr. Rahman said:—'It seems to me that many of those who are against the boycott of the Simon Commission are labouring under an unspoken fear that boycott of the Commission on the part of the Muslim community will injure the cause of separate representation. For the assurance of such gentlemen, let me tell you in plain and unequivocal terms that in the present state of our national life I look upon separate representation through separate electorates as the corner-stone of Muslim politics. When each community is assured that its interests and privileges are safe in the hands of the common State that we have succeeded in evolving, there will be, I believe, no necessity and no cry for separate electorates. The day we long for is yet to come. Between the two great communities of India, there is still "doubt, hesitation and pain". Let us recognise honestly and frankly the existence of mutual jealousy and suspicion exists, let us agree to be represented through the medium of separate electorates.

'As the edge will be taken off from the acerbity of mutual suspicion, and so, day by day, we shall advance nearer towards that rapprochement which in the fulness of time will make communal representation take its rank among the evil necessities of life'.

#### President's Speech.

Maulvi Mahomed Yakub was applauded when he rose to deliver his presidential address *ex-tempore* in Urdu. He apologized for not delivering a written address because of the short notice. He would speak in his mother tongue. (Applause.) He expressed gratitude for this opportunity for the service of his community, particularly because Calcutta, where the session was being held, was one of the foremost cities of the world and was also the home of his ancestor who held the position of a vizier over a century ago.

The session was meeting with the gloom cast over it by the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan. Hakimji had worked whole-heartedly for Hindu-Muslim unity and just before he laid down his life, Hakimji had observed a ray of that unity emanating from Madras.

Continuing, the President said their homage to Hakim Sahib should take the form of pursuing the object of unity which the late Hakim had so much at heart. From the time of the inception of the League he had been one of its leading lights and had presided over the League sessions twice. The President also mourned the death of Syed Alay Nabi.



## League Session Controversy.

Proceeding, the President said that for over two weeks a controversy had been going on as to whether the session should be held in Lahore or Calcutta. He said that, according to the League's constitution, voting could not be by proxy nor could it be through telegrams addressed to a third person. The first meeting voted for Lahore through votes obtained mostly by proxy, and in this connection Malik Feroze Khan Noon had played a leading part. Dr. Kitchlew, the Secretary, felt obliged not to accept the illegal decision and even if he had not recorded the request for a revision from Madras and Calcutta, Dr. Kitchlew would have been justified, in accordance with the sacred provisions of the constitution, to call another meeting. This second meeting was called but the previous meeting had, however, made it difficult for the self-respecting Aga Khan to accept the presidentship in view of the dispute. The second meeting gave the final decision and Calcutta was decided upon as the venue of the session.

Proceeding, Maulvi Mahomed Yakub said that Mr. Jinnah had urged every one not to commit himself on the question of the Simon Commission but the Lahore Muslim League was the first to give its views under Sir Muhammad Shafi's chairmanship. How could, then, Sir Muhammad be expected to change his views unless he acted as he did in respect of his views on the Muddiman Committee, which he changed after his membership of the Government. The President next read out the provision in the constitution that the annual session 'shall be held' as decided by the Council of the League. How could, then, the decision of the council for a Calcutta session be disobeyed? As regards the united Muslim opinion, what guarantee was there that such unity would be forthcoming? If unity was not attainable in spite of honest efforts, a self-respecting community must not shirk disunity on fundamental matters. If the Muslims held that religion could not be divorced from politics, then the lead in favour of boycott of the Commission given by the session of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema at Peshawar and by the Khilafat Conference at Madras should be acceptable to them. How could the Muslim League keep its mouth shut in view of the self-respect of the community, which demanded a courageous lead?

## An Unasked for Commission.

He did not think that he should give his views on the Simon Commission elaborately as those had been widely circulated. The President recalled that in 1924, 1925 and 1926 the popular representatives in the Assembly had passed resolutions by an overwhelming majority asking for an advancement of the enquiry, but the Government was adamant. Now the Government had given them a commission unasked. The reason was apparent. The Government felt convinced that unity between the two communities was least likely at this time and that, therefore, the Commission should be appointed at this juncture. Indians had been excluded because they would not have agreed on a common report. Was there any basis for his fear? There was the case of the Skeen Committee which dealt with the most delicate problem of defence of the country. Not only were all the Indian members unanimous in their recommendation, but Mr. Jinnah made the European president also sign the unanimous report. Mr. Jinnah had acted so brilliantly in conducting the cross-examination in London that the Government had decided not to risk a similar performance and a unanimous report.

He declared that he was not a non-co-operator but had always been a co-operator and it was as a co-operator that he would urge the Muslims to co-operate with the Government in the manner the Government had co-operated with them. Thus, as the Government did not want their co-operation on the Commission, so they would not offer co-operation and go near the Commission. His religion did not teach the turning of the second cheek if one was smitten, but tit for tat.

#### Hindu-Muslim Differences.

Dealing next with the Hindu-Muslim quarrels, he did not wish to apportion blame, but their Prophet had left an example for them for guidance in the action of his Holiness in making a settlement with the Jews of Medina in the spirit of give and take. This spirit of give and take should regulate their conduct. Unity would not mean the absorption of one community by another. They should, like a joint Hindu family, sit at home and mutually divide the property. Such action would win for them the respect of the outside world, but if they took recourse to litigation and decision by a third party, the world would condemn them for casting a blot on the fair names of their ancestors. He opined that the Madras Congress settlement would be acceptable to 90 per cent. of enlightened and educated Mahomedans. The League should consider this settlement and declare its opinion on it, showing where it was acceptable and where they wanted its modification. They had been challenged to produce a constitution and had been taunted that if they were sincere in their declaration of readiness for Swaraj, they should produce a joint agreement. This challenge must be accepted and the Congress settlement should be examined and passed with whatever changes were deemed desirable, for, after all, it was not unchangeable like the laws of the Medes and the Persians. When an agreement was reached on the settlement it would be entrusted to a special committee of Hindus and Muslims to draw up a constitution on the basis of the settlement. Thereafter a special meeting of the League could be summoned to ratify the Swaraj scheme.

#### Need for Muslim Newspapers.

Finally, the speaker felt that the community had not a single daily newspaper in India, while the Hindus and other communities had a large number of journals in every town. To fight political battles without a newspaper was like a sepoy without a sword. If they could not float even one newspaper how could they claim to have Swaraj? The Maharaja of Mahmudabad's efforts in this direction should be supported by every Muslim. Indeed, this was their primary duty,

The President then declared that the country was faced by an intense storm. The Muslim League vessel was being steered through troubled waters. He would try to pilot it safely but for his success he would need the fullest assistance of the crew. He particularly thanked Mrs. Besant and Mrs. Naidu for attending the session. This ninety-year old lady was younger than their young men, and would not seven crores of Muslims show even the strength of this ninety-year old lady? He expressed gratitude to Mrs. Naidu, to whose efforts the Madras unity settlement owed so much.

The President's address lasted 45 minutes and he resumed his seat amidst loud and prolonged applause. The meeting then adjourned.

## SECOND DAY—31ST DECEMBER 1927.

On this day the Muslim League reassembled in the morning. The attendance was thinner than yesterday, being confined to delegates only. The conversations among delegates showed that the general desire was not to take any definite decision on the question of electorate and merely to welcome the Madras settlement as paving the way for unity without committing themselves to its detailed provisions.

## 1.—Condolence Resolutions.

The first two resolutions were moved from the Chair and were passed, all standing. They read:—

(1) The All-India Muslim League mourns the irreparable loss to India caused by the sudden death of Masihul-Mulk Hakim Muhammad Ajmal Khan. His selfless devotion in the cause of India's freedom, his untiring efforts in welding together the various communities into a united nation and his invaluable services to the nation in general and the Muslim community in particular had made him a national asset. The country has lost in him a profound scholar and one of the greatest exponents of the art of healing and every one in need has been robbed by his death of a true friend and generous benefactor.

The All-India Muslim League places on record its profound sense of sorrow at the passing away of an illustrious Muslim patriot and conveys its sincere and heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and prays to the merciful Allah to bestow eternal peace on the soul of our departed leader.

The League calls upon all who mourn his loss to make a united endeavour to commemorate his life's work by placing on a sound financial basis the Jamia Millia Islamia and the Ayurvedic and Unani Tibba College, which owed their origin to him and were maintained through his untiring efforts.

(2) The All-India Muslim League places on record its sense of loss at the sudden and premature death of the hon. Syed Alay Nabi, who was associated with the League from its very inception, had throughout worked for it and stood by its principles. The League offers its sincere condolences to the members of the family of the deceased and prays to Allah to bestow peace on the departed soul.

## 2.—Boycott Resolution.

Sir Ali Imam (Bihar), then, on behalf of the Subjects Committee, moved the Boycott Resolution, which, the President declared, was the principal resolution of the morning. It ran as follows:—

The All-India Muslim League emphatically declares that the Statutory Commission and the procedure, as announced, are unacceptable to the people of India. It, therefore, resolves that the Mussalmans throughout the country should have nothing to do with the Commission at any stage or in any form.

Sir Ali IMAM said the Simon Commission had become the subject of deep concern and anxiety to the people of India. The procedure was already known and did not require a detailed exposition. It was clear, firstly, that Indians were excluded from the Commission and, secondly, that the procedure reduced them to the position of witnesses. The resolution dealt with both these points.

His Majesty's Government had given excuse after excuse for the exclusion of Indians. The statutory bar had been first brought forward, *vis.*, that the Act conceived of a purely Parliamentary Commission, though it did not say so in plain terms. As Indians were not represented in Parliament, the exclusion of Indians was inevitable. A meaning had thus been placed which the statute did not imply. The legal excuse could not, therefore, be taken as placing a just and reasonable construction on law.

Sectarian interests were trotted forth for their exclusion. He did not believe that British statesmanship and intellectuality, which stood at such

high water mark, could not find representative Indians. The British Cabinet could have taken the simple step of asking the provincial and central Legislatures to elect a panel from among their members or non-members, out of whom five could be selected—two Hindus, one Muslim, one European non-official and one High Court judge. But all of these must first be elected by the popular Legislatures. The British Government would then have been absolved from any criticism about Indian representation.

As regards 'the accusation of prepossessions, there was no individual in the world without a prepossession. 'But if there are prepossessions, once the oath of office is taken, whether he be British or Indian, he looks upon the discharge of his duties as an official who has got to be dispossessed of his prepossessions. And I venture to think that there are many Indians who will act on that Commission with a sense of responsibility and not allow their prepossessions to come in, just as much as any Britisher. Has a single Indian judge of a High Court been found to make communal bias and not dispense impartial justice? Was the membership of the Commission more honourable and onerous than a High Court judgeship? Are you going to submit to this indignity? I am a moderate of moderates. I was called a sun-dried bureaucrat. But my conscience finds it impossible to accept this Commission.'

Their opposition to the Commission, said Sir Ali Imam, was not merely sentimental. He would not stand out on that ground alone. The real issue was what was the relationship between India and England? Ours was that of serfs who would gratefully pick up the crumbs falling from the table of British statesmanship. It was another relationship to which they were lavishly treated during the war. 'We were called partners. We were told of the change in the angle of vision. Our blood had mixed in the battle-fields of Flanders. I frankly tell you I fully believed that there was a change in the angle of vision, but I have been disillusioned. We are now told we are not fit to sit at the same table. Are you going to go down? I, for one, an ex-sun-dried bureaucrat, refuse to take the insult lying down'.

He next examined the procedure of the Commission. The position of the select committees would be that of witnesses. 'Is that partnership? Mr. Baldwin has called the committees colleagues of the Commission. Misuse of language cannot go farther. They are no more colleagues than petitioners in a court of justice. We cannot agree to this scheme which has taken away from us the position of partners so long as we are treated as petitioners. The delegations to London will also be petitioners. Are you going to subscribe to this arrangement? (No no.) It is the thin end of the wedge. Indians must remember their place in the Empire is subordinate. We Indians to-day assert our right to be treated within the Empire as equal partners and if we do not succeed to-day in enforcing this assertion, we shall succeed tomorrow or the day after. Do not be misguided by the thought that our claim will not be heard. That claim that has not behind it that assertion which I am urging will never be heard; but the claim that has behind it the force of assertiveness, that claim in the long run will succeed. Therefore, do not be demoralized by any consideration as to whether this thing would be heard or not. If it is not heard to-day, the time is coming when it will be heard. If still it is not, we shall not care whether it is heard or not.'

Continuing, Sir Ali Imam said the resolution had been purposely drawn up in terms which would be acceptable to all parties—to those who denied

any voice to Parliament, to those who stood for a round table conference and to those like him who would have been satisfied with Indian members on the Commission. The resolution would meet the wishes of all those who had not only self-respect but had the necessary patriotism to assert without hesitation that self-respect demanded that they must participate on equal terms in the framing of the constitution of future India. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Jinnah.—That is the minimum.

Sir Ali Imam.—Yes, that is our minimum. You as a responsible body of members of the All-India Muslim League will not hesitate to give your unanimous support the resolution couched in terms not intemperate but sober. There was no feeling of resentment in the resolution, concluded Sir Ali Imam.

Mr. Yakub HASAN (Madras) said his experience of the failure of the boycotts organized by the non-co-operators had made him sceptic about the success of another boycott. But he was glad that the country's attitude had proved him to be wrong. The views of the Muslim ex-members of the Government were for boycott by three to one, with the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, Sir Ali Imam and Sir Abdur Rahim, on one side, and Sir Muhammad Shafi, on the other. Unless the session laid down the outlines for the future constitution, the boycott would not be as fully effective as they would like it to be.

By this time attendance had grown very considerable, and Dr. Ansari was given an ovation as he entered the hall.

Mr. TAMIZ-UD-DIN, opposed the resolution. He said the exclusion of Indians had wounded Indian vanity, but he asked when before had under British rule Indians been given the right to participate. Only a commission with a majority of Indians would have been acceptable. 'We have not been able to coerce England to appoint such a commission.' It was said India had won the right of equality during the war. But since then, non-co-operation had been launched and failed. There were in India two schools of thought. Those who would take nothing from England would logically boycott the Commission, ("Mr. Mohamed Ali."—Hear, hear.) though such course would be of no avail. But there were others who believed that the British Government out of fear of India, at some future date, going out of the Empire was anxious to concede its legitimate aspirations. These men should take advantage of the fresh opportunity offered to them sincerely.

The non-Brahmins and the depressed classes would go before the Commission. The Muslims were also a depressed class under economic slavery to the majority community. Could Muslims boycott when the other depressed classes did not do it? 'It will do some harm to the whole of India and from the Mahomedan point of view it will be suicidal. Do not fritter away your energies in boycott. If you can agree upon a constitution and can compose your differences, that will be a fitting reply to Lord Brienhead's challenge and if after that your demands are satisfied, if England goes back upon promises, then it will be time to consider what steps to follow to bring England down upon her knees, if that is at all possible. If you boycott the Commission now, you will be putting the cart before the horse. England has given you a challenge to draw up a constitution. If we can agree, there cannot be any purpose in boycott.'

Maulana Mohamed ALI replying to Mr. Tamiz-ud-Din, asked, if the speaker was a better household manager, would Mr. Tamiz-ud-Din entrust to

him the task of his household management? So it was that no nation could concede to another nation the right of rule over it. The Germans were better organisers than Englishmen. Would Englishmen, therefore, surrender their country to German rule?

'I admit,' proceeded Mr. Mohamed Ali, 'I am unfit to wrest the rule back from English hands, but I do not concede any ethical basis to the British purpose in India. I challenge the preamble of the Act of 1919. My quarrel is not with the jury. Even if it had consisted of Indians exclusively, my objection would have remained. If a matriculation standard paper is put on India to the 700 members of Parliament, not 70 will pass the test and these will be those who are untrue to India's salt.'

Miss Mayo, continued Mr. Mohamed Ali, had been supplied information by imperial service men. He had proof with him of a letter written by Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed to Mr. Coatman, asking for a subsidy for the "Aligarh Mail." ("Voices".—Read it.)

The speaker said it ran—'I introduce to you Mr. Jaffry, editor, "Aligarh Mail." Will you please pay him from September to January? (Shame.) Will you please give him general advice and give him also practical tips.—Yours Sincerely, Ziauddin.'

Mr. Mohamed Ali.—It is this class of people who come to tell us not to boycott the Commission in the interests of Muslim solidarity.

Reverting to the subject of the Statutory Commission, Mr. Mohamed Ali said the British Government already made up their mind on the subject of changes in the constitution. No Hindu was going before the Commission. So there was no fear of their gaining at the expense of Muslims. The Britishers' game was only to grant something to one community against another. The resolution before them was a tame one. He did not believe that for a little gain the Muslims would sacrifice the glory of Islam. If they did, with what face could he go to men like Major Graham Pole and ask them to adopt the Muslim faith?

Mr. Jaffry, ex-editor of "Aligarh Mail," testified to the letter quoted by Mr. Mohamed Ali having been given to him by Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed and his having resigned when this subsidy was not forthcoming from the Government.

Mr. Barkat Ali, Secretary, Punjab Muslim League, said even assuming that the final responsibility lay with Parliament, the inclusion of Indians on the reporting body could not have interfered with that responsibility. Place-hunters might declare otherwise, but the League as a self-respecting body must not accept a course incompatible with national honour and self-esteem.

Mr. Chagla, Secretary, Bombay Provincial Muslim League, asked whether Muslims had fallen so low as to lend themselves in the market place to the highest bidder between the Government and the Hindus? They must join the Hindus to make the boycott universal and effective.

Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed (Bengal) asked whether British rule had made Mr. Tamiz-ud-Din go so low as to call Muslims depressed classes.

Maulana Zafar Ali, of Lahore, declared that with the exception of those who worshipped official pottage, the whole Punjab was with them. When what they thought to be the reactionary Mahasabha element had surrendered itself to the Congress, will the Muslims must not hesitate?

Mrs. BESANT then addressed the gathering. She said every invader before the British had identified himself with the people of India and had

settled down and become Indians. The Britishers had, however, remained foreigners. They extended their domains by resorting sometimes to fraud and sometimes by setting Indians against Indians. The Britishers had wielded authority but had never become Indians. During the war Mr. Asquith had stated that foreign yoke would be intolerable and had called upon Indians to help.

Mrs. Besant declared that since she entered public life 53 years ago, she had claimed home rule. 'No one nation has the right to govern another. (Hear, hear.) The life of a people may change, but the nation remains indestructible. It is as eternal as God Himself and to deny the right to that nation of self-government is treason against humanity as a whole. Those who live in India should identify themselves with her life and national struggle. My own fundamental objection to the Commission is that it is a step backward.'

Mrs. Besant recalled how the King had through the Duke of Connaught sent a message to the people of India on the reforms being the beginning of Swaraj within the Empire and how this exclusively foreign Commission was appointed and how it was to go back even on the existing Reforms. 'We have the right to rule ourselves and it is in the assertion of this right that I voted in the Congress for national independence.' The Prince of Wales had wisely called this Commonwealth of Nations. Domination must disappear and every nation must be willing partner in the commonwealth on the basis of mutual service.

Continuing, Mrs. Besant declared that this resolution was such that all could join to support it. She was not sorry that even two or three Indians were not appointed on the Commission as that might have made them linger on by accepting half a loaf instead of full. Concluding, she made an impassioned appeal for boycott of this foreign Commission.

The resolution of Sir Ali Imam was put to the vote and was declared carried amidst acclamation by an overwhelming majority, only two dissenting.

### 3.—Joint Electorate.

Mr. Barkat ALI next moved the compromise resolution, on behalf of the Subjects Committee, adopting the Delhi proposals and the Congress settlement, subject to the modification that separate electorates, which are inevitable under the present circumstances, will be abandoned in favour of general electorate with reserved seats only after Sind is actually constituted into a and the separate province North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan are actually granted the same reforms as other provinces. The resolution ran as follows :—

#### CONSTITUTION FOR INDIA.

The All-India Muslim League authorizes the Council of the League to appoint a sub-committee to confer with the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress and such other organizations as the council may think proper for the purpose of drafting a constitution for India, in which the interests of the Muslim community will be safeguarded, having regard to the following proposals, which the League approves of and adopts, and subsequently take part in the National Convention which is going to take place in Delhi in March next, as suggested by the Indian National Congress.

#### SIND AND FRONTIER PROVINCES.

(1) That Sind should be separated from the Bombay Presidency and constituted into a separate autonomous province.

(2) That reforms should be introduced in the North-West Frontier Province and in Baluchistan, placing them on the same footing as the other provinces.

(3) That in the present circumstances the representation of Mussalmans in the different Legislatures of the country through separate electorates is inevitable and that the Muslims will not accept any scheme involving a surrender of this valuable right unless and until Sind is actually constituted a separate autonomous province and reforms, as aforesaid, are actually introduced in the North-West Frontier and Baluchistan provinces. When these requirements are fully satisfied, the Muslims will be prepared to abandon separate electorates in favour of joint electorate with reservation of seats, fixed on the basis of the population of different communities, subject to what is stated hereinafter :

(i) In Sind, the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan, the Muslim majority shall make the same concessions with regard to the proportion of seats reserved to the Hindu minority that the Hindu majority in other provinces would make to Muslim minorities over and above the proportion of the population of the provinces which shall be the minimum basis.

(ii) In the central Legislature, Muslim representation shall not be less than (?)

#### RELIGIOUS SETTLEMENT.

The League further resolved bodily to incorporate in the text of the above resolution the provisions in the Madras Congress settlement regarding liberty of conscience, religious legislation in legislatures, the cow and music question and conversion.

Mr. Barkat Ali said the resolution repeated their old position, with this important exception that for the first time in the history of the League there was a change in its angle of vision. 'We are offering by means of this change a sincere hand of fellowship to those of our Hindu countrymen who have objected to the principle of separate electorates.' If the Hindus joined the Muslim demand and the Government, Sind could be separated and the Frontier Province and Baluchistan be given reforms. But unless these conditions were fulfilled, Muslims would not be able to give up separate electorates.

Maulana Shaukat Ali congratulated the League on the resolution before it. He said the Congress Committee had sat till 2 o'clock at night and the Hindus fought Hindus to come to a settlement. No occasion arose for the Mussalmans to speak. It was now for the League to adopt the settlement and earn the everlasting gratitude of the Muslim community.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan said that lakhs of Muslims today all over India were crying against the proposed abandonment of separate electorates. A time would be coming when the need for such electorates would cease to exist. But they must wait for that opportunity. The speaker urged that the principle of adult suffrage should be made another condition to the abolition of separate electorates. Muslims were economically poorer and adult suffrage would be the only remedy.

Mr. Wahid Hussain testified from his knowledge to the return of Muslim commissioners in overwhelming numbers in Chittagong and elsewhere. This had happened in spite of the zemindar and Mahajan influences, because the Muslim consciousness had now been roused. Here was a chance for the best men to be returned. 'Some say separate electorate is our "magna charta." I deny that. We have a right to exist and on that right we stand. Let us give a lead to the masses.'

Mr. Aziz-ul-Haq (Bengal) proposed that the discussion on the matter be deferred for a month.

Mr. Nurul Haq supported Mr. Barkat Ali. He contested the statements of Mr. Wahid Hussain and declared that with the exception of two municipalities in east Bengal, there was no other municipality with a Muslim majority. The fate of the Bengal Pact had shaken his faith.



Mr. Akram Khan (Bengal) warned the delegates against adult suffrage, proposed by Mr. Zafar Ali, which would reduce, according to census, the Muslim majority in Bengal. He wanted the speakers to state frankly what their views were.

#### Dr. Besant's Acceptance

At this stage, Dr. BESANT announced her acceptance of the proposals. The Commonwealth of India Bill provided for general electorate with reserved seats. She, however, accepted the condition proposed in the resolution regarding the creating of autonomous provinces of Sind, the Frontier Province and Baluchistan and would see that this change was made in the Bill; otherwise she would not work for its passage in the House of Commons. She, however, foresaw no difficulty in getting the Bill so amended.

Maulana Abul Kalam AZAD declared that by the Lucknow Pact they had sold away their interests. The Delhi proposals of last March opened the door for the first time to the recognition of the real rights of Mussalmans in India. The separate electorates granted by the pact of 1916 only ensured Muslim representation, but what was vital for the existence of the community was the recognition of its numerical strength. Delhi opened the way to the creation of such a state of affairs as would guarantee to them in the future of India a proper share. Their existing small majority in Bengal and the Punjab was only a census figure, but the Delhi proposals gave them for the first time five provinces of which no less than three (Sind, the Frontier Province and Baluchistan) contained a real overwhelming Muslim majority. If the Muslims did not recognize this great step they were not fit to live. There would now be nine Hindu provinces against five Muslim provinces and whatever treatment Hindus accorded in the nine provinces, Muslims would accord the same treatment to Hindus in the five provinces. Was not this a great gain? Was not a new weapon gained for the assertion of Muslim rights?

Mr. JINNAH said those who adopted the Delhi proposals considered them just and reasonable, but did not get that support which they expected from their Hindu friends till the Congress Committee met in May in Bombay and revived the dead body of the Delhi proposals. He emphasized that every one was not expected to agree to every word or every clause of the long resolution before them but so far as the spirit of it was concerned he was in favour of it. All his public life he had believed in doing his best to carry his people with him. When he came to Calcutta, he had no doubt that some opponents would blame them for having adopted the resolution that they were going to adopt. But in this League he found an overwhelming majority for the resolution.

'These proposals', proceeded Mr. Jinnah, 'are the outcome of many heads. You cannot expect every one to commit himself to every word and every clause of this long resolution. But so far as the spirit of the proposals is concerned it is undoubtedly just and fair to both communities. We have got a majority in this house, but shall we be able to carry the majority in the country? Nothing will please me more, but at the same time it will be fair to say that I am not so sure that I am satisfied that the majority of Musalmans throughout the country are in favour of it. That remains to be decided and it will be our business to try our best to make the people understand and convince them, to carry them with us, because on merits I am convinced that this proposal is the finest thing that can happen to Musalmans and to India.'

Mrs. Sarojini NAIDU said Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had struck the only note that was necessary, namely, that they should not look at the settlement in the petty spirit of traders. The Indian National Congress was not a sectarian body. It adopted the Muslim proposals because they were so just and so reasonable and not as the price paid for Muslim co-operation in the national struggle. She would ask them to see that the great democratic spirit of Islam and the great metaphysical spirit of Hinduism should mingle to make for Indian nationhood.

Major Graham POLE, on being called upon to address the gathering, said he belonged to a group that held, in the words of Mr. Lansbury, that no nation had been made by God that was fit to rule another nation. They believed that good government was not a substitute for self-government. Every people had something to contribute to the world's progress, if allowed self-determination. As for Lord Birkenhead, he had heard hard things about him. But Lord Birkenhead had been the greatest unifier of India for generations. On his return he would tell the Secretary of State so. The speaker said that by coincidence he had attended the Lucknow Congress and also the Madras Congress, at both of which Hindu-Muslim settlements were arrived at. The Madras settlement was even greater than the Lucknow one. The one thing wanted was that every Indian should be proud of being an Indian, so that like Romans he could say:—'I am a citizen of India and that is enough.' He was sorry why they so much read British history. He felt humble when he read Indian history, which should make Indians tremendously proud of themselves.

Finally, Major Graham Pole assured the audience that the Labour members were sincerely anxious to do their best for India and if due to the long distance there was not a proper understanding of the Indian situation, let them not misunderstand India's friends in England, who were doing their best every day to bring about a better understanding and to work for that Swaraj which, he hoped, many like him would see India in their life time attain triumphantly.

Both the amendments having been withdrawn, the resolution of Mr. Barkat Ali was put and declared carried unanimously amidst cheers.

A small sub-committee was appointed to recommend changes in the rules and the session was adjourned till next day.

### THIRD DAY—1ST JANUARY 1928.

#### Other Resolutions.

Resuming its session in the town hall this afternoon, the All-India Muslim League adopted a resolution condemning the action of Sir Muhammad Shafi and his colleagues in rebelling against the authority and decision of the Council of the League to hold its session in Calcutta and purporting to hold one at Lahore in contravention of the constitution of the League. The meeting further opined that the responsibility for causing a split among the Mussalmans at this critical juncture in the history of the community must rest upon Sir Muhammad.

The meeting next adopted a resolution regretting that the Punjab Provincial Muslim League had flagrantly defied the authority of the present body of the League and deemed it essential as a matter of disciplinary

principle that the constitution and authority of the League should be maintained and upheld. In the circumstances the only course open to the League was to disaffiliate the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and it was resolved that this body should be disaffiliated and the Muslims of the Punjab called upon to constitute a provincial Muslim League truly representative of the Punjab.

Speaking on the resolution, Maulana Mahomed Ali said that it was painful to ask for the disaffiliation of a body like the Punjab Provincial Muslim League and he should have liked that an opportunity be given to Sir Muhammad Shafi to justify his conduct, but the way Sir Muhammad had behaved left no other course open.

The League also decided, on the motion of the president Maulvi Mahomed Yakub, to call upon the Mussalmans of India to lend full support to the project of the Maharajah of Mahmudabad and others to start a daily Muslim newspaper at Lucknow.

The remaining resolutions condemned firing on the Mahomedans at Kul-kati and the Government's refusal to institute an enquiry into the occurrence and the refusal of a passport to Mr. Saklatvala to return to India, resented the action of the Central Provinces Government in refusing to issue reports of Mr. Awari's health and demanded the release or trial in open court of the Bengal Ordinance prisoners.

At the request of the president, Pandit Madan Mohan MALAVIYA addressed the meeting and, in an impassioned appeal for unity, said that the responsibility for the present state of affairs in the country rested mostly upon their own heads. Their quarrels in every instance related to the question of cow killing or music before mosques and the Pandit thought that it was yet possible for them to sit down and arrive at some conclusion to settle the matter. As it was, their opponents were taking advantage of these differences and misrepresenting them to the civilised world outside and by their own action they were perpetuating their own serfdom. The Pandit recalled Plassey and asked them to unite and prevent these deplorable occurrences in order that they might usher in a new era of prosperity and power.

Referring to the Simon Commission, the Pandit characterised it as a God-given opportunity to rouse them to a sense of duty and responsibility and exhorted all Indians to make its boycott as complete as possible.

Concluding, the Pandit appealed again to those present, asking them to be united, with only one desire, namely, to be just to each other and to have confidence in each other, always remembering that they were Indians first and Hindus and Mussalmans afterwards. If they could do that, there would be nothing to stand between them and Swaraj.

Addressing the meeting, Mr. JINNAH declared :—A constitutional war has been declared on Great Britain. Negotiations for a settlement are not to come from our side. Let the Government sue for peace. We are denied equal partnership. We will resist the new doctrine to the best of our power. Jallianwalla Bagh was a physical butchery, the Simon Commission is butchery of our souls. By appointing an exclusively white Commission, Lord Birkenhead has declared our unfitness for self-Government. I welcome Pandit Malaviya and I welcome the hand of fellowship extended to us by Hindu leaders from the platform of the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha. For, to me this offer is more valuable than any concession which the British Government can make. Let us then grasp the hand of fellowship. This is

indeed a bright day, and for achieving this unity thanks are due to Lord Birkenhead.

In declaring the session closed, the president described it was a successful one, having regard to the quantity and quality of the work done.

## The Rival Lahore Session.

The Lahore section of the All-India Muslim League, which was wavering till the evening of the 30th December, and was anxiously awaiting the decision of the Calcutta section having learnt of the Calcutta decision not to postpone the meeting, also made up its mind to hold the session at Lahore the next day.

Twenty-five persons and institutions had sent either telegrams or letters from different parts of the country, approving of the Lahore session of the League. These included messages from the Muslim Federation (Bombay), the Anjuman Ittihad-i-Islamia (Poona), the Khilafat-ul-Mas'ih (Qadian) and the hon. Sir Mahomed Fakhruddin (Bihar).

The Lahore session of the All-India Muslim League commenced on the 31st December in Habibia Hall, Islamia College, at 11-25 a.m. The hall was crowded. Lord Headley was cheered as he entered the hall. At 11-20 the president-elect and chairman of the Reception Committee entered the hall in procession, accompanied by prominent members of the Reception Committee. Prominent Punjab Khilafatists including Dr. Muhammad Alam, Malik Lal Khan, Chaudhri Afzal Haq and Shaikh Hissam-ud-Din were also present.

Three hundred and fifty-two delegates attended the session, 300 from the Punjab, 21 from the United Provinces, 12 from the North-West Frontier Province, six from Bombay and Delhi, each, four from Calcutta and three from Sind.

### Syed Amir Ali's Message.

Messages expressing inability to attend the League and wishing it success were read from a number of Mahomedans from different parts of the country. A message was received from Syed Amir Ali (London), which said that the policy of boycott was prejudicial to the interests of India, specially to minority interests.

### The Welcome Address.

Welcoming the delegates, Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Chairman of the Reception Committee, said he could not refrain from saying that he observed with a feeling of sadness that some of their prominent brethren who should have been present here to-day were absent. The small body of Muslims holding their meeting at Calcutta had proved itself incompetent to understand the seriousness of the time and the intensity of the present situation.

Referring to the boycott of the Simon Commission, he said that the decision of an overwhelming majority of Mussalmans to co-operate with the Commission was not hastily adopted. It was the result of profound knowledge and painful experience of the treatment meted out to them by the Hindus. There was no other course open to them but to come to this conclusion. The Muslims as a minority community must vindicate their rights and the only chance under the circumstances was to approach the Simon Commission with manly composure and seek justice from it.

Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan then enumerated the following Muslim demands:— (1) separate representation in the various legislatures and local bodies on a population basis, (2) a system of separate electorates, (3) separation of Sind from Bombay, (4) grant of reforms to the Frontier Province and Baluchistan, and (5) adequate Muslim share in the services.

Referring to the last demand, Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan said:—We declare it most emphatically that, while we have no desire to infringing on the rights of

others, we strongly resent our rights being infringed on by others. We shall wait to see what notice Government take of our complaint in this connection. If I were literally to interpret the sorrows of Muslims in this matter, I would say better a terrible end than terror without end.

Concluding, Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan said that if further extension of the reforms was made in the provinces, the Punjab should not be denied provincial autonomy as a strong desire for autonomous government thrilled their very soul. It was mostly the valour of the Punjabi soldier which saved the modern civilisation from utter ruin. Was it possible that with such a record and equipment for self-government, the Punjab was to be denied the right to have autonomy? He did not think that the British people would be so insensible to the demands of gratitude as to ignore their right to this high privilege.

Appealing to his Hindu fellow-countrymen, he said :—It is not yet too late to adjust our differences. Everything depends on our unity. Utter the magic word that we are united and the world will bow before you. Keep silent and you remain in bondage. Together we can master even hostile fate. But if you do not accept the friendship we offer to you, the blame will rest with you. ●

#### President's Address.

The president, Sir Muhammad Shafi then delivered his presidential address.

'I am sincerely convinced', said he, 'that in the existing political conditions in this country, joint electorate, whether with or without reserved seats, would be certain to furnish a periodically recurring cause of friction between the two communities and would in consequence be in the highest degree injurious to the cause of Indian nationalism.' He ridiculed the suggestion that separate electorates had been the cause of inter-communal friction. He pointed out that separate communal electorates were first introduced as a result of the Minto-Morley Reforms and for a period of years since their introduction the two great communities lived in an atmosphere of mutual co-operation and good-will. One of the basic principles of the modern system of democratic government was that the legislature should be really representative of the people. The system of electorates in India must, therefore, be so framed as to give the fullest scope to the real representation of the population, including the Adi-Hindus and labour.

Referring to the Simon Commission, he said what concerned the Muslim community, in particular, was the provision in the Reforms Scheme of 1921 that the present Commission was to consider the working of the franchise and the constitution of electorates, including the important matter of retention of communal representation. He, therefore, requested all to settle their political differences and then present a united demand on behalf of India regarding the next step in the constitutional advance. A unanimous demand thus made would be irresistible, no matter what the constitution of the Royal Commission might be.

The Muslim League, therefore, should call upon the sister communities to arrive at a satisfactory settlement of inter-communal political controversies and to prepare a scheme of constitutional reforms which, while satisfying the legitimate aspirations of the Indian political intelligentsia, would at the same time ensure to the Muslim community and other minorities in India enjoyment of their just rights and the satisfaction of their reasonable aspirations.

He urged the appointment of a committee to collaborate with the committees appointed by other organisations to evolve a satisfactory scheme and to bring about unanimity of public opinion.

Sir Muhammad Shafi demanded the introduction of constitutional and administrative reforms in the North-West Frontier Province and separation of Sind from the Bombay Presidency. The speaker discussed at length the future reforms and said the existing control of the Secretary of State in departments dealing with internal affairs was not conducive to the best interests of administration. He suggested that the Government of India be relieved of the irksome chains with which they were bound in this respect.

Detailing his suggestions for immediate reforms in the central and provincial machineries, he urged "inter alia" that the Foreign and Political Department be placed in charge of one member; and an additional civilian member

for the Army be appointed to take his place within the Indian Cabinet; and membership of the Viceroy's Executive Council be increased to eight, four of whom should be Indians. He also opined that in the central Government the member or members in charge of transferred subjects be selected from among the elected representatives of the people in the central Legislature and should be made responsible to it for their administration. As for diarchy in the provinces, Sir Muhammad Shafi remarked that this interesting experiment should now be abandoned and they should revert to the principle of unitary provincial Governments.

He then dwelt on the legality or otherwise of the meetings of the council of the All-India Muslim League held at Delhi on November 20th and December 11, respectively. He said he was elected president of the League by both the council meetings and the Punjab Muslim League duly approved of his election and the council of the All-India Muslim League thus became "functus officio". As far as the questions of venue and presidentship of the annual meeting were concerned it was obvious that where the validity of a decision depended on the agreement of two parties, no one of them had any power to set it aside after the necessary agreement by the two had been arrived at. The pretence of Dr. Kitchlew to call the meeting of December 11th was the statement issued to the press by him that he (Sir M. Shafi) would relinquish the presidentship in favour of the Aga Khan, should the latter be willing to support separate Muslim electorates.

That, said Sir Muhammad Shafi, was obviously a matter between the Aga Khan and himself and until he finally tendered his resignation of the presidentship, there was no occasion for calling another meeting of the council to decide what had already been finally settled on November 20th. Therefore, the meeting held on December 11th was entirely illegal and he did not know under what rule and authority Maulvi Mahomed Yakub was elected president of the Calcutta session of the League, yesterday. This election took place without even sending any intimation to members of the council of the All-India Muslim League, who were in Lahore, and, therefore, as they truly elected president of the All-India Muslim League, Sir Muhammad Shafi declared the meeting in Calcutta as illegal.

The League then adjourned and formed into a subjects committee to discuss draft resolutions which were put before the open session which met again in the afternoon at 3-30 p. m.

#### 1.—Invitation to Non-Muslim Communities.

Mr. Ghaznavi (Bengal) moved the first resolution, which ran as follows:—

'This annual session of the All-India Muslim League invites the leaders of all non-Muslim communities in India to come to a satisfactory settlement with the Muslim community, before the Royal Commission begins its work, regarding the future constitution of India and the rights and interests of the Muslim community as embodied in the foregoing resolutions, with a view to a joint preparation of a draft constitution for India, adequately safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of all communities, for presenting the same before the Statutory Commission or the British Parliament or both.'

In moving the resolution, Mr. Ghaznavi advised the audience not to boycott the Commission, which would be prejudicial to Muslim interests. Points of order were raised by Mr. Afzal Haq and Raja Gaznafar Ali Khan that the speech the mover was reading had no relevancy to the subject under discussion.

The president allowed the speaker to continue.

After a few minutes Mr. Aurengzeb Kan (Frontier Province) also rose to a point of order and asked the president to inform the house on which resolution the mover was making the speech.

Maulana Akhtar Ali Khan asked the president whether there was any time limit for the mover of the resolution.

Amidst constant interruptions, Mr. Ghaznavi had to hurry through his speech.

Maulana Hasrat Mohani, seconding the resolution, said their experience of the non-co-operation days showed that the boycott of the Commission would not succeed. They should, therefore, put their heads together and frame a constitution for India, which they should place before the Simon Commission and if that

was not accepted there would be time for a boycott. He did not believe that they had been insulted by the exclusion of Indians from the Commission. The insult was in the appointment of the Commission itself. He therefore advised that they should not talk of boycott at that stage.

Chaudhri Afzal Haq, (Khilafatist, Punjab) next rose to speak and was greeted with loud shouts of 'Allah-o-Akbar' by the Khilafatists who had turned out in greater strength in the afternoon session than in the morning session. He said if a mutual understanding with sister communities in India was their objective, they should devote their attention to that question; why should they bring in the Royal Commission at all in the resolution?

At this stage the speaker was again greeted with loud cheers by the Khilafatists when the president had to appeal for order. On this more confusion followed and Dr. Muhammad Alam and Malik Lakshan, Khilafat leaders, had to come on the "dais" and appeal to the audience to stop all shouting. Within a few minutes order was restored and Chaudhri Afzal Haq, continuing, said that because the boycott programme during the non-co-operation days failed that was no reason why they should give up boycotting the Royal Commission. He believed that no programme in the world was ever carried out completely or successfully to the satisfaction of all. As Mussalmans it was their duty to convert the whole world to Islam. Had they been able to do it? If they had not, should they give up Islam? After 50 years of begging, all that the Government had given them was separate electorates. Was that the be-all and end-all of Mussalmans? From his own experience in the Punjab Legislative Council he could say that they, the Mussalman members of the Council, by co-operating with the Government, had gained nothing. For six years the Government took advantage of the Muslim co-operation and when it found that the Hindus and Mussalmans were fighting with each other and Mussalmans' co-operation was no longer necessary, it did not care for them.

He wanted to move an amendment to the resolution, but as he had exceeded the time limit the president asked him to resume his seat.

Mr. Masudul Hasan, (United Provinces), supporting the resolution, said the boycott would do great harm to the Muslims, who were ruining their interests by swallowing poisonous pills in the shape of Indian nationalism.

#### An Amendment.

Dr. Muhammad Alam (Punjab, Khilafatist), in moving an amendment proposing the deletion of the last portion of the resolution, said the resolution was really divided into two parts, both of which asked them to beg, leading them nowhere. He could, however, understand the sense of the first portion of the resolution, but the second portion, in his opinion, was meaningless. They should not welcome the Commission, as by sending an all-white Commission the British Government had insulted them. He would refuse to beg and accept as a gift even if the whole of India was given to him. (Hear, hear). They would not gain anything by bowing before the Commission and kissing the feet of its members.

Mian Shah Nawaz, Punjab, supporting the resolution said that he refused to believe that all Mussalmans were flatterers of the Government and possessed slave mentality. Mussalmans at times of need and crisis had sacrificed even their lives. What they wanted, the speaker continued, was that in framing a constitution for India the interests of the seven crores of Muslims must be safeguarded.

Raja Gaznafar Ali Khan, (Punjab), supported the amendment and said he was entirely in favour of the first part of the resolution and did not believe that any Mussalman would oppose it, but the second part of the resolution wanted to divide them and raise a controversial issue. If the League was anxious to pass a resolution regarding the Commission, it could do so in the form of a separate resolution. The acceptance of the amendment did not prevent them from bringing a fresh resolution on the Commission and it would be still open to them either to welcome or boycott it. He had wired to Mr. Jinnah that the boycott question should not be brought forward at the Calcutta session of the League. He appealed to the audience not to be misled by the idea that because many prominent Mussalmans were present in the gathering, who were in favour of welcoming

the Commission, they should suspend their own judgment. They should not forget that equally capable and self-sacrificing Muslims had gathered in Calcutta to discuss this very question and they should not ignore their views.

Mr. Aurangzeb Khan (Frontier Province) said he knew full well that the Commission will not bring any special blessings for them, but if it was boycott the Muslim interests would suffer.

Mr. Anis Ahmad (Bombay) said that Muslims would not gain anything from Hindus, who treated their own brethren (the depressed classes) as untouchables.

Mr. Ali Bahadur Khan (Bombay) said for five years he was connected with the Khilafat and non-co-operation movements, but he could not understand the policy of Mr. Jinnah and the boycotters.

Mr. Mazhar Ali Azhar (Punjab) supported the amendment. He was sorry to see that they were all blaming the Hindus, but the fact was that more of their rights were taken away by the British Government than by the Hindus. Muslims would gain nothing by begging. The Sikhs in the Punjab got whatever they wanted by their determined agitation. He wished the Muslims had turned their attention to the numerous wrongs done to them by the British and had not blamed the Hindus.

Mr. Zafarulla Khan, (Punjab), said that if they wanted to end the British domination, either they should rise in an armed revolt or submit to a Parliamentary Commission. The first was not possible and, therefore, they should accept the Parliamentary Commission and submit their views before it, especially when the Hindus were doing active propaganda and placing their views before the British public in England.

Sheikh Hissamuddin (Punjab Khilafatist) supported the amendment and said that if the Mussalmans could stand on their own legs no power on earth could destroy them and there was no necessity for them to beg before the Commission at this stage.

Dr. Alam moved the closure of the debate, which was accepted by the president, but before he put the resolution to the vote the president wanted to speak on the resolution and said that by keeping away from the Commission they would invite an "ex parte" decree against them.

Chaudhri Afzal Haq, at this stage, rose to a point of order and asked whether the president, being chairman, could speak for the resolution.

Dr. Alam asked whether it was fair for the president to do so.

The president said he had every right to speak as he was not occupying the position there as Speaker of the House of Commons.

The amendment of Dr. Alam was then put to the vote and declared lost by the president.

Dr. Alam and Mr. Afzal Haq claimed a division. The votes were counted by provinces. It was found that Bengal, the U. P., Bombay, Delhi, and the Frontier Province were against the amendment and of the Punjab delegates 63 were in favour of the amendment and 101 against.

Dr. Alam challenged the counting of the Punjab votes. The president refused to recount the vote and declared the amendment lost and the original resolution carried, amidst loud applause. Confusion and uproar now followed, which continued for some time, and the Khilafatists, headed by Dr. Alam, left the hall shouting, 'Shame, shame' at the president and the organisers of the League.

#### Other Resolutions.

Order being restored, the following resolution moved by Mr. Yamin Khan were then passed unanimously.

"This meeting of the All-India Muslim League declares that neither the proposals formulated by some Muslims in their individual capacity at Delhi on March 2nd 1927, in their original form nor in their amended form as passed by the Congress at Madras are acceptable to the Mussalmans of India."

The following three resolutions were put from the chair and passed unanimously.

The first urged the introduction of constitutional reforms in the Frontier Province and Baluchistan, the second urged the separation of Sind from Bombay,



with a reformed constitution of its own, and the third appointed a committee of 27 members with Sir Muhammad Shafi, "ex-officio" member, to devise a scheme of constitutional advance and to collaborate with the committees appointed by other Indian organisations to frame a constitution for India on the principles adopted by the Lahore annual session.

Sir Muhammad Iqbal moved a resolution protesting against the existing arrangements whereby the Muslim community in Bengal and the Punjab was deprived of its majority rights in the provincial Councils, and urged the Government to remove this injustice done to the Muslims in 1921.

This was also passed unanimously. The League then adjourned.

#### SECOND DAY—1ST JANUARY 1927.

The All-India Muslim League reassembled to-day at 12-30 p.m. The attendance was thin and the Khilafatists were not present. The president read two messages, which he had received from Bengal. The first message, signed by ten Muslims of Calcutta, including Mr. A. H. Ghaznavi, Dr. Suhrawardy, Khan Bahadur Imdad-ud-din Ahmed, Deputy President, Bengal Council, Sahibzade Ali Naqi and others, stated that Bengal opinion was behind the Lahore session and wished it success and asked Mr. Ghaznavi to move a resolution on the Statutory Commission. The second message was from four Bengal members of the All-India Muslim League, who regretted their absence but recognised the Lahore session and asked the president to count on their votes for the Statutory Commission.

#### Earmarking of Grants-in-aid for Muslims.

Dr. Shafaat Ahmad Khan moved the first resolution to-day, which asked the Government to earmark a reasonable share of the bonuses and grants-in-aid meant for various nation-building departments for the purpose of the Muslim community. He said his experience of the United Provinces and of the Mahomedans in other provinces was that a very large part of the grants earmarked for education was not spent on Muslim education. Whenever they had tried to ask for more money for Muslims they had been dubbed as reactionaries. Therefore they had no other alternative but to demand that the Mahomedans should be given an adequate proportion of grants, otherwise they would be deprived of those advantages which they were entitled to get from the Government.

Mr. Shuja ud-din supported the resolution which was carried.

#### Round Table Conference of Muslim Leagues.

Mr. Masudul Hasan (United Provinces) then moved a resolution authorising the president to call a round table conference of Muslim Leaguers of all organisations to bring about unity of thought in political ideals amongst the Muslims of India and said they should make every effort to unite the various differing elements among Muslims. It was extremely unfortunate that they were so hopelessly divided especially at this juncture, when one set of resolutions was being discussed at Calcutta and another at Lahore.

Mr. Gul Mahmud (Punjab), seconding the resolution, said that their differences would be exploited by a third party and they would gain nothing from the Government if they went on fighting.

Raja Gazna'ar Ali Khan rose to a point of order and asked the president whether it was relevant to the subject under discussion to refer to such incidents which took place outside. The resolution was passed unanimously.

#### A New Constitution for Muslim League.

Sheik Abdulla (United Provinces) next moved authorising the council of the All-India Muslim League to appoint a committee to draft a new and suitable constitution for the League as the present constitution had become quite out of date. The resolution was passed without discussion.

#### Election of Office-Bearers.

He next moved :—

"The All-India Muslim League hereby elects Sir Muhammad Shafi as its president, Sir Muhammad Iqbal as its general secretary and Maulana Hasrat Mohani

as joint secretary. The League also authorises the council to appoint joint secretaries for various provinces and make suitable arrangements for the collection and expenditure of the funds of the League and engage such paid servants or office-bearers as are necessary in the opinion of the council for carrying out the work of the League.

Mr. Ghaznavi (Bengal), seconding the resolution, paid tributes to the many qualities of head and heart of the president and said he had great pleasure in welcoming Sir Muhammad Shafi as president of the League. Turning to Sir Muhammad Iqbal, he said that Sir Muhammad Iqbal was not only known throughout India from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin but throughout the world. He had therefore equally great pleasure in seconding Sir M. Iqbal as secretary. Speaking about Mr. Hasrat Mohani, he said Mr. Mohani needed no introduction at his hands. When a man like Mr. Hasrat Mohani had come to their side after revising his previous opinion, it was a proof that there was right and reason on their side.

Mr. Fateh Mohammed (Bombay) supported the resolution.

Kaja Gazanfar Ali Khan, (Punjab) opposed the resolution and said he could not understand how they would support such resolutions when they had appointed a round table conference to bring about unity among the various sections of Mussalmans. They could not ignore the fact that another All-India Muslim League was being held at Calcutta and that in the circumstances they should not adopt such a course. He had nothing to say against the personality of Sir Mohamed Shafi or Sir M. Iqbal, but they should not adopt this resolution in the name of the All India League. Mr. Jinnah was already the president of the All-India Muslim League.

At this stage, the president, interrupting the speaker, said 'No. Mr. Jinnah is no longer president'. He had ceased to be president from June, 1927, when his term expired.' The president read the rules of the League on this point.

Sheikh Mohamed Sadiq (Amritsar) said he had been sitting as a neutral since yesterday and was watching all the discussions, but today's debate on this resolution compelled him to speak out his mind. He was pained to find that objectionable remarks were made by some members about Messrs. Jinnah, Ansari, Mohamad Ali and Abul Kalam Azad and that such speakers were not stopped by the president. When the Khilafatists were present in the hall yesterday all the supporters of the president were sitting quiet but today, taking advantage of their absence, they were in a merry mood and passing all sorts of resolutions. This reminded him of the proverb: 'When the cat is away the mice are at play.' He had met Dr. Kitchlew on Dec. 14 last at Amritsar, when the latter said that he had not resigned the secretaryship of the League. (Voices of 'No. no.')

They should not take advantage of the absence of Mr. Jinnah, Dr. Kitchlew and other Muslim leaders from this session and appoint office-bearers. The time will soon come when they would have to meet in conference over the Statutory Commission and the framing of a constitution for India, when they would have to explain their action of today. If they appointed these persons today, they would have to face trouble at that conference. He asked Sir M. Iqbal and Mr. Hasrat Mohani not to accept the offices offered to them. After concluding his speech Mr Sadiq left the meeting.

That part of the resolution which related to the election of Sir M. Shafi was put to the vote by Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, chairman of the reception committee, and was carried amidst acclamation.

#### Calcutta Unity Conference Decision.

Mr. Hasrat Mohani moved the last resolution:

"This session records its sense of deep regret that the Hindus, as a community, should have rejected the decision of the Calcutta Unity Conference regarding the question of cow slaughter and music before mosques by means of unanimous resolutions passed at the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, the All-India Aryan Congress and now at the Madras session of the Indian National Congress in a form not acceptable to Muslims."

This resolution was passed. The session then concluded.

## C. P. & Berar Hindu Sabha Conference.

The Central Provinces and Berar Provincial Hindu Sabha Conference was held on the 6TH AUGUST in the Venkatesh Hall, Nagpur. The Chairman of the Reception Committee, in welcoming the delegates, pointed out the imperative necessity of the Hindu Sangathan and Sudhi movements.

Sir Sankaran NAIR took the Chair, on being proposed and seconded by Sir B. K. Bose and the Hon'ble Sir S. M. Chitnavis, Mr. Aney, and others. Sir Sankaran thanked the Nagpur people for having accorded him a rousing reception, and expressed that the splendid reception was not intended for him personally, but for the Hindu cause for which he came to Nagpur. He then delivered his speech. The following is the Presidential Address:—

I regard my election to preside over your Conference as a great compliment to me. As I do not belong to the Sabha, I shall proceed at once to tell you my reasons for supporting the Sabha in its essential activities as I understand them.

A few years ago our Mahomedan brethren were at a great disadvantage. They had not availed themselves of English education to the same extent as their Hindu brethren. They naturally therefore formed their associations to press claims, so that they may not suffer by the new reforms. We know advocates go often further than is warranted by the justice of the case. The Mahomedans' claims were pressed with a certain vehemence. They cannot be blamed for taking every legitimate step to secure their interests. The Government were only too willing to meet them half way. It is now acknowledged that the partition of Bengal was carried out to assist the Mahomedans. To meet the Bengalee agitation to set aside the partition the Mahomedans formed their Muslim League. Lord Minto acknowledged their claims to preferential treatment and his view was carried out in the reforms with which are associated the names of Lord Morley and Lord Minto. When the reforms were next taken up for consideration, the Hindus and Mahomedans entered into a pact known as the Lucknow Pact. There was therefore no Hindu-Mahomedan question. Soon after these reforms, Gandhi started his Non-Co-operation campaign. He brought about a co-operation between the Hindus and Mahomedans by the practical surrender of the Hindu rights to the Mahomedan Khilafat movement. He did not foresee the consequences nor did the Mahomedan leaders who were associated with him. The latter had accepted Non-violence for the period of the few months within which Gandhi had promised Home Rule. That period elapsed and three was, as everyone might have foreseen, no Home Rule. The Pan-Islamic consciousness, however, had been already stimulated. The uneducated classes of Mahomedans sought to compel the Hindus to admit their claims. Frightful riots were the consequence in Malabar and all over Northern India. This might have been foreseen. On the outbreak of war there was an attack by the Mahomedans who sympathised with Turkey, on the Hindus in south west Punjab and when Gandhi began his Non-Co-operation campaign which was followed by riots against the British Government, Hindu temples were attacked and destroyed though the Muslim leaders were then co-operating with the Hindus. Gandhi continued his subservient policy with the result that everywhere, the ignorant classes of Mahomedans advanced further claims in spite of their leaders; the Hindus were alarmed, the tension between the two classes became great, the gulf widened and finally Gandhi finding it hopeless to deal with the Hindu-Mahomedan question retired from the field altogether. His legacy, however, hampered his party and from that time forward the Non-Co-operation or the Congress Party have been crying for peace and unity but they have never succeeded in bringing about any agreement between the Hindus and the Mahomedans nor is it likely that they ever shall. Gandhi's successor, Mr. C. R. Das, entered into a pact the result of which was, according to Bengal politicians themselves, to embitter the feelings between the Bengal Hindus and Mahomedans still further. The following is an extract from a signed article by Prof. Ramesh Chandra Banerjee, published in the November number of "The Vedic Magazine" of Lahore:—"The stage of degradation which a demoralized community has reached can better be

imagined than described when that community failed, on every occasion of necessity, to protect its women. Yet this is the condition of the Hindus of Bengal. In spite of the resounding cries of 'Swaraj' and 'Hindu-Muslim unity,' in the midst of stirring lectures by our patriots (mostly Hindus) appealing to the spirit of independence and manliness of the people, the ineffective plans of our leaders for wrecking the Councils and snubbing the Government into submission are synchronising with the most effective schemes of Muslim goondas for the most brutal violation of Hindu womanhood in the villages of North and East Bengal. Great 'leaders' and famous editors are busy with lectures and articles on 'big' things, so that this trifling matter, viz., the honour and chastity of our mothers and sisters are left to the mercy of our living 'gods,' viz., the Muslims. How easy it is for Muslim goondas to kidnap Hindu girls (married and widowed) and how frequently these horrible outrages occur will be evident from the cases cited below, all of which happened within a short space of time."

And after giving numerous instances, he adds with reference to the pact of Mr. C. R. Das :—

"There are very many instances in which responsible Government officials of the Islamic persuasion have sheltered Muslim kidnappers, ravishers and murderers. Then fancy the lot of the weak, helpless and disarmed Hindus, when 80 per cent of public posts will be reserved for Muslims, without any reference to their qualifications and competency, as provided in the Swaraj pact."

#### Need for a Hindu Sabha.

The Swaraj or Gandhi party have committed themselves to a line of action and to a policy which practically puts it out of their power to effect any reconciliation or to protect Hindus so far as it is in the power of an Indian political party to do so. It is essential in these circumstances that there should be a Hindu Sabha to act and do for the Hindus what the Muslim League is doing for the Mahomedans. It is possible that dealing with each other the Hindu Sabha and the Muslim League might be able to come to some agreement. Otherwise judgment might go by default. It seems fairly certain that the non-co-operation or the Congress party is a broken reed to rely upon for this purpose. It is useless to put off this Hindu-Mahomedan question to the future for solution. Time only widens the gulf. The Congress journals at first maintained that if England is out of the way and Home Rule is granted the question may be settled between the Hindus and the Mahomedans; but the Mahomedans at once said and the Muslim League declared that unless their interests are safeguarded there should be no further reforms. After this declaration the old Swaraj cry has ceased. Gandhi's party are now prepared apparently to accept any conditions that may be laid down by the Mahomedan advocates. Anyhow it is not safe to leave our interests in their hands.

The Hindus have decided that joint electorates are essential for peace and harmony and certain Mahomedan leaders have recently made a very laudable attempt to bring out an agreement accepting joint electorates under certain conditions. It seems unnecessary to discuss the conditions as our Mahomedan brethren are not prepared to accept joint electorates under any circumstances. And it is quite possible that the Swaraj party will eventually accept the Mahomedan position of separate electorates and widen the gulf for years to come. To show the difference between the mentality of the Congress party and the Hindu Sabha I shall draw your attention to one of the conditions put forward by the Mahomedan leaders; one of their conditions is that Sind should be constituted into a separate province, the reason of course being that it has a population of which the Mahomedans form the majority. On this the Congress passed the following resolution :

'Resolution of the Congress :—

"In regard to the proposal that Sind should be constituted into a separate Province, the committee is of opinion that the time has arrived for the redistribution of Provinces on linguistic basis, a principle that has already been adopted by the constitution of the Congress.

"The Committee is of opinion that such a readjustment of provinces be

immediately taken in hand and that any province which demands such reconstitution on a linguistic basis be dealt with accordingly.

"The Committee is further of opinion that a beginning may be made by constituting Andhra, Sind and Karnatak into separate provinces."

The majority of the people of Sind are Mahomedans. They naturally demand Sind to be constituted into a separate province and the Congress in terms agree to the Mahomedan demand, without making it a condition even that the Mahomedans should agree to the general principle of redistribution of Provinces on a linguistic basis. But the more serious consideration is that they attach no weight to the opinion of Hindus in Sind before their fate is decided. The resolution of the Hindu Mahasabha is this :—

"The Mahasabha deprecated any attempt to constitute new Provinces or Legislatures for the purpose of giving a majority therein to any particular community. In the opinion of the Mahasabha the question of the creation of new Provinces should be considered, if necessary, independently of any proposals and exclusively on their merits."

The Mahasabha will be mainly influenced by the opinion of the Hindus of Sind. They have declared that they do not wish the separation of Sind as it would place them at the mercy of the Mahomedans which they do not like. It appears to me that this Sabha has to act on their view and repudiate the Congress resolution which disregards the Hindu interests. It shows the danger of the situation and the necessity of the Hindu Sabha to protect Hindu interests. The necessity of Sangathan will further illustrate this.

#### Necessity for Sangathan.

Let me turn to that aspect of our movement. It is said in the Bengal Administration Report 1925-26 :—

"The Khilafat agitation had fostered aggressive sectarian passions and had inculcated a disregard of law and order where it could be represented that the claims of religion were involved. Upon the abolition of the Khilafat, this exasperated communal consciousness remained; unable now to vent itself upon Government, it turned upon the rival community." This was so in Malabar, South-West Punjab and elsewhere.

What has been the consequence in Bengal? I am unwilling naturally to describe the situation in my own words. I shall refer to the Swaraj organ :

"The cases of the abduction of Hindu women in Bengal have become a matter of daily occurrence. Reports published in newspapers present before us the horrible outrages that are being perpetrated upon many a woman in Bengal. The East Bengal and the North Bengal specially are the centres of the nefarious activities of the hooligans and it is there that a good number of women become victims of the list of the goondas. Cases are almost daily reported of abduction, assaults and serious outrages on women from East Bengal and North Bengal. But I think, a good number of such cases does not come to light for fear of public scandal and shame. So the cases of outrages are far more greater and horrible than are reported and published in the columns of newspapers," writes Suniti Devi in "Forward."

"First, the goondas seem to carry on these abductions in an organised way and they have found that no attempts are being made against them either by the Government or the public. This has so much emboldened them that they are merrily going on with their business, and escaping the punishment that is due to them in such cases. Secondly, the women in most cases are so weak in physique that they cannot defend themselves against the onslaught of their enemies and thus fall an easy prey to the ravages of the goondas.

"But the public too has a duty towards the women. They have witnessed with perfect calmness the terrible oppression and read the reports of outrages without being affected, it seems, in the least. But does this callousness benefit the people of Bengal? Do not the brutal oppressions of our mothers and sisters touch their hearts? An 'emphatic no' seems to come from my heart. If they really felt for the unhappy souls they could evince it at least by some means or other. But the women have cried in vain for help. Their tears have not melted

the hearts of the people. They have been subjected to inhuman tortures but they seemed to have none on earth to resist the goondas and to rescue them from the clutches of the lewd.

"Should it not inspire the youth of Bengal with the idea of putting an end to the organised outrages by the goondas?"

I ask why is this so. Is it not due to the fact that Gandhi and the Swarajists have entered into a pact with the Khilafat Party to fight the Government and they do not wish to do anything which may prejudice the Pact that they are allowing their women to be thus treated. This is the horrid result of the policy of Gandhis and Dases.

All this oppression in Bengal is facilitated by our caste divisions. This is what a Professor says in the signed articles to which I have already referred :

"But can we expect communal solidarity in a community which is divided into hundreds of water-tight compartments? When the Bania is attacked the Brahmin keeps aloof, when the Chamar and the Bairagi are victims of Muslim tyranny, the Kayastha and Baidya look on with indifference. There is only one section of the Hindu population of Bengal who know unity and can defend their women; those are Namashudras. These men, through their brave opposition to Muslim aggressiveness, have saved, in many places, not only their own women and hearth and homes, but the families of high-caste Hindus also. For had the tide of Muslim fanaticism and rowdyism been allowed to surge on, unopposed, it would have swept off everything before it—Brahmins, Kayasthas and all others. Yet these Namashudras are regarded as untouchables?"

#### Objects of the Hindu Sabha.

This explains the Sangathan movement. In Bengal, the evil appears in an exaggerated form. But it exists more or less in various other parts of the country. The Hindu Sabha wishes to invite you all to assist them to protect the women from these outrages, to organise the Hindu society to make it an organism so that every part of it, every caste or class, may feel any injury inflicted on any one as an injury to itself. For that purpose the Hindu Sabha would remove all the restrictions that stand in the way of co-operation between classes, anything which is felt by any one as humiliating. I am not in a position to say and I do not think any one is in a position to state whether this object can be achieved throughout the length and breadth of India. In some parts of India certain classes approximate so much to one another that even fusion may be effected, while in other parts the differences between certain classes may be so radical that it will take a long time for the gulf to be bridged. The means will have to vary with localities, classes, men etc. But to me it is certain we can go a great way. Personally I would go further. The restrictions that now divide classes or castes cannot be justified in these days. Few of the four great castes perform their proper functions but they perform the functions of the other castes. There is no sense then in claiming the privileges without the performance of those duties. The Non Brahmin castes are generally speaking not disposed to recognize the rights claimed by Brahmins. Insistence on them will perpetuate dissension and discord. The non-caste Hindus are resolved not to submit to their position of inferiority and humiliation. A society far more conservative than ours, i. e., the Mahomedans of Turkey, have brushed aside all the religious obstacles that stand in the way of our progress. Religion is an institution intended for our moral progress and you may be certain that if it stands in the way of our moral progress, those rules of conduct must have been intended for other times, and conditions.

The Hindu religion has divided us Hindus into various watertight compartments. Those compartments are divided by rules imposed upon them for reasons which may have been sound in ancient days but many of them have no meaning at the present time. They appear, on the other hand, mischievous in these days when the castes or classes are not confined to the duties or functions of their caste. But for the violation of their rules, persons, families, groups of persons, classes have been put out of caste. Thus for instance for drinking in ignorance water from a well used by what is considered a lower class, persons

have been put out of caste. There are persons so treated who have not renounced Hinduism but retain their faith and veneration for the religion of their fathers. In my opinion, it is only right that they should be taken back into Hinduism.

Similarly there are persons who have been forcibly converted into Hinduism but who are still in faith Hindus and would willingly come back if we would receive them. I can see no reason why they should not be taken back.

Women who have been kidnapped or raped have not been received back into caste in Bengal and elsewhere, but have been put out of caste. They have to lead a prostitute's life, unless they are able to find protection in a Mahomedan household. It is urged that it is in the interests of women that they should be under the protection of a Mahomedan who would protect them against further indignity rather than with those who are not able to protect them. If their husbands or the other Hindu families would not receive them back or, in other words, if Suddhi is impracticable or impossible, I agree, and Hinduism that cannot protect its women had better disappear. That Hinduism is obviously not fit for Swaraj. I have been told by my friends that there is no possibility of a Hindu Moslem unity; if I am right in my views I say that unless that unity is desired by both and their good faith is shown not by declarations but by acts there is no use of seeking it. The proposals now before the public do not show a real desire for unity on terms of equality. Inequality which breeds discord will lead to subordination, humiliation and disaster.

#### Suddhi A Legitimate Movement.

Those who maintain that this should not be done are entirely ignorant of the past history of the Hindu religion. At one time Buddhism spread over a great part of India yet in those parties scarcely a Buddhist is now to be found. All of them must have been converted into Hinduism. Asoka sent his missionaries all over Asia and converted them all into Buddhism. For our purpose there is no difference between Buddhism and Hinduism. In Southern India there were thousands and thousands of Christians at one time. Their descendants are all Hindus. In Southern India inter-marriages between Christians and Hindus were common until legislation interfered with it; in fact such marriages were encouraged by the Roman Catholic priests in the hope that the Christian wife would persuade her Hindu husband to accept Christianity. And conversions and reconversions were the result. Entire communities were brought into Hinduism; their priests were recognized as Brahmins and made it possible to conform into a life acceptable to Brahmanism. And their Kings and fighting castes were made Kshatriyas. An Englishman highly respected by the Indian Mahomedans suggested to me that if we could recognize the Mahomedans as Kshatriyas we might be able to assimilate them and overcome all difficulties. In fact Hinduism has grown by assimilation and to say that we cannot accept outsiders is showing ignorance of the past. I agree that a community may discard any member whom it does not wish to continue in the community. But there is nothing to prevent persons so discarded from forming themselves into a community Hindu in faith or by being accepted by any community—Hindu, Buddhist or Jain; the Suddhi movement is therefore perfectly legitimate and will not be opposed by any Hindu who has any knowledge of our past.

#### Resolutions.

The Conference reassembled in the afternoon, and adopted resolutions (a) paying homage to the late Swami Shraddhanand (b) expressing the opinion that a spirit of retaliation would be awakened in the Hindus against the Moslem in consequence of the outrages committed by them in their antagonism to Shuddhi and Sangathan; (c) exhorting the Moslem leaders to take necessary steps against the commission of heinous offences, and requesting the Government to make a definite announcement regarding the playing of music along thoroughfares without molestations by others (d) regretting the Punjab Government's decision allowing a Mahomedan deputation against the judgment of Mr. Justice Dulipsingh in the "Rangila Rasul" case, (e) repudiating the Moslem demand for the stoppage of all music both in private and in public, by Hindus during the

Moharrum festival and (f) strongly recommending the immediate absorption of all sub-castes into their parent castes, and recommending inter caste marriages for the achievement of Sangathan and organic unity. The Conference then adjourned till next day.

#### Joint Electorates Approved.

The Conference reassembled on the 7TH AUGUST and adopted the following resolutions:—

Such Hindus as embrace Islam or Christianity and are reconverted should be taken back into Hinduism, and absorbed into their original castes.

The next motion called upon the Hindus to abolish untouchability, and recommended the taking of steps for its ultimate extinction.

The establishment of an orphanage, called the Shraddhanand Alaya, for helpless persons who fall into the "clutches of Christianity or Islam" was advocated by the next motion.

The Conference then passed a resolution accepting the proposal for Joint Electorates; and hoping that the Moslem community would resist the temptation of sordid communalism, as held out in the conditions foreshadowed by Mr. Jinnah; and expressing the view that the proposal for the separation of Sind should not be entertained, as it was based on the pernicious principle of creating a new province for the purpose of creating a majority of the Moslem community.

#### Frontier Administration.

The Conference declared that, in view of the fact that Baluchistan and the N. W. Frontier Provinces were the key provinces for the defence of India from external aggressions, so long as Indians had not trained for the defence of India, the Government should not interfere with the system of administration obtaining in those provinces; and opined that the introduction of Reforms into those provinces would be detrimental to the defence of India, and that the proposal of reservation of seats for the different religious communities would perpetuate the virus of communalism and thwart the growth of national patriotism.

Resolutions supporting the popularisation of the custom of remarriage of young widows in castes where it is prohibited by custom, pleading for the establishment of Akharas for providing training in physical culture, favouring the convening of a round table conference of Hindu leaders for settling the Brahmin and Non-Brahmin controversy were agreed to.

#### Other Resolutions.

The Provincial Hindu Conference further adopted resolutions strongly protesting against the writings of Khawaja Hassan Nizami of Delhi on Shivaji, congratulating Shashimohan Dey and Kharag Bahadur for saving the honour and virtue of Indian womanhood, and inviting the next session of the All-India Hindu Maha Sabha to this province.

The Conference was then dissolved.

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